

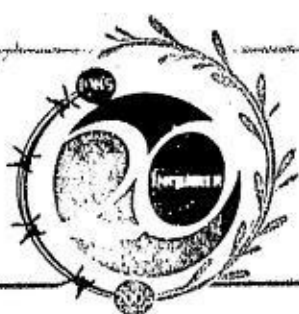


ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1

RP wins 2 top awards in film fest in Singapore

WORLD / A30

Berlusconi to quit as Italian PM



BUSINESS / B7

'Tiangge' problem may be mall owners' creation



LIFESTYLE / C1

Fred Baldemor's 'warm' sculptures

Vatican leader calls for 'Da Vinci' boycott

ROME—A VATICAN OFFICIAL ON FRIDAY CALLED for a boycott of the coming "The Da Vinci Code" film, saying it contained "slandorous" offenses against Christianity that would have provoked a worldwide revolt had they been directed against Islam or the Holocaust, an Italian news agency reported.

Msgr. Angelo Amato—Pope Benedict XVI's former No. 2 man when Benedict was head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith—made the VATICAN/ A23

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, May 1, 2006

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6 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 142 P18

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Church experts tell brides: No backless gowns, please

By Christian V. Esguerra

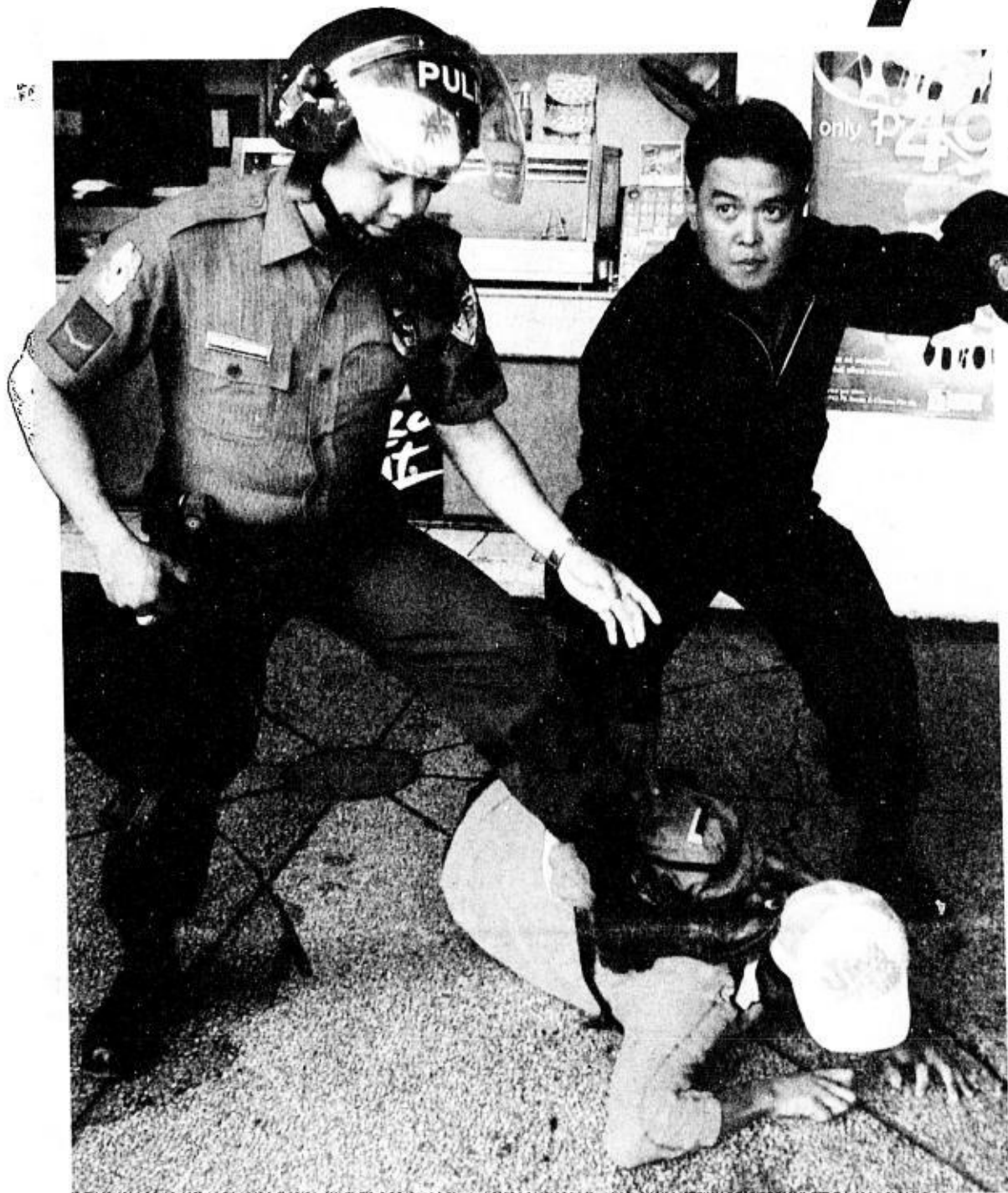
BRIDES ARE AGAIN REMinded to keep those backless and spaghetti-strapped gowns out of the altar.

Church experts who

CHURCH/ A23



Labor Day showdown



POLICEMEN pin down Ronald Crisologo, a militant from Southern Tagalog, outside a mall near the Edsa Shrine where protesters held a rally on the eve of the Labor Day commemoration. Crisologo was arrested after protesters ran after a policeman who took their banners, but he was later released. RAFFY LERMA

Militant groups vow to retake Mendiola

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Luige A. del Puerto

SCORES OF MILITANTS TRIED TO INVADE the Edsa Shrine yesterday, but police drove them back, giving them a foretaste of what could happen if they pushed forward with their plan to retake Mendiola Bridge in Labor Day protests today.

No one was hurt in the scuffles but traffic was snarled for hours, the glass door of a nearby drugstore was shattered, and two policemen were seen on television keeping a protester immobilized on the ground by pinning him on his nape with their feet.

Brushing aside police appeals, militant leaders vowed to bring their protests today to historic Mendiola—now called the Don Chino Roces Bridge—to dramatize their demand for higher wages and President Macapagal-Arroyo's removal from office.

For demonstrators, the bridge has been a historic symbol of resistance to unpopular governments. Protesting farmers, students and others have been killed around Mendiola since the repressive days of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship.

Police have barred rallies around the bridge and, during past demonstrations, set up barbed wire and other barricades, including container vans, to block any attempts by ralliers to get near the Palace.

"We will definitely try to reach Mendiola," said Carl Ala, spokesperson of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas. But he added: "We will push to get to Mendiola, but not to the extent that we would end up hurting people."

The protesters have designated various assembly points around the capital prior to linking up at the Liwasang Bonifacio and Plaza Miranda in Manila later in the day.

"We're mobilizing around 30,000. That's just Bayan forces," Ala said.

"It's up to them if they will go there (Mendiola)," the President's chief of staff, Michael Defensor, said in a phone interview.

Defensor said that at press time, there was "no solid threat" against the administration.

"But we're ready," he said. Both the military and the national police placed their forces around Metro Manila on full alert.

"You don't want us to be caught LABOR DAY/ A22

Workers warned on agenda of middle class

By Amando Doronila

THE WORKING CLASS SHOULD be marching today to push their demand for a fairer share of the nation's wealth, but if they don't look out, nonworking-class militants will push them out of their day in the streets and hijack Labor Day to serve political interests that have little to do with advancing workers' interests.

ANALYSIS

The nation celebrates Labor Day today under the trauma of two events.

First, the May 1, 2001, storming of Malacañang by the lumpen-proletarian cohorts of former President Joseph Estrada protesting his arrest on charges of plunder.

Second, the declaration of a national emergency on Feb. 24, in response to a military coup attempt which had absolutely no relation to working-class interests. In a case of obtuse political thinking, the Arroyo administration included working-class leaders, especially the Left (for example Representatives Crispin Beltran and Satur Ocampo), in the crackdown on an alleged multi-class coup conspiracy to overthrow the government.

These two events set the tone WORKERS/ A22

Mutineer studies coup prevention

By Nikko Dizon

NAVY LT. ANTONIO TRILLANES IV, detained for the 2003 Oakwood mutiny, has earned a degree in public administration, submitting a final paper that ironically dealt with "Preventing Military Interventions."

He was not present at last week's graduation ceremonies at the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG) in Diliman, Quezon City. (See story on Page A8.)

But the 35-year-old officer has managed to channel his frustrations at the government through what seemed to be a benign academic requirement, which he completed during the summer term of May 2004, shortly before the presidential election.

From his cell at the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), Trillanes wrote a 37-page paper that analyzed policies purportedly being implemented by President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration to prevent coups.

He used the Oakwood incident as a jump-off point for discussion, concluding that administration measures did not address issues the rebels raised when they assaulted the Oakwood Suites in Makati City in July 2003.

Trillanes warned against future coups and a possible civil uprising and stressed the need for a president with "strong political MUTINEER/ A8

Labor has priority over capital, says CBCP head

By Christian V. Esguerra, Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

WHATEVER JUSTIFICATION workers need for their protests today, they got it from Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the 122-member Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

Lagdameo yesterday lamented that workers in the Philippines were "oftentimes deprived of the

just share of the fruits of their work."

In a statement on his Web blog, the Jaro archbishop stressed that there should be "interdependence and complementarity" to achieve economic progress, quoting from the "Compendium of the Social Teachings of the Church."

Lagdameo noted that in any social question, "the rights of the weak, the dignity of the poor, and the obligation of the rich, the perfecting of justice through charity,

must always be taken into account in the just ordering of society."

The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, whose priorities included transforming the local Church into a "Church of the poor," recognized the "priority of labor over capital," Lagdameo noted.

"Labor Day can be a happy occasion for labor and capital/government to express to each other how much they need each other

and what they can give to each other for the good of the country," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is set to announce today a "strong package of amelioration measures" for workers, according to Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. He did not give details.

"Because we have made significant gains in the economy, we can now pay back the people, especially the working class," Bunye said in a statement.

He said the President supported "a reasonable wage hike" hammered out by the tripartite regional wage boards.

"A middle ground can be reached if all sides are focused on common goals and principles, mainly the good of the nation," Bunye said.

The last time the wage board in Metro Manila granted a pay raise was on June 16, 2005—a P25 daily minimum wage increase LABOR/ A21

Maoist gains in Nepal inspire CPP leader



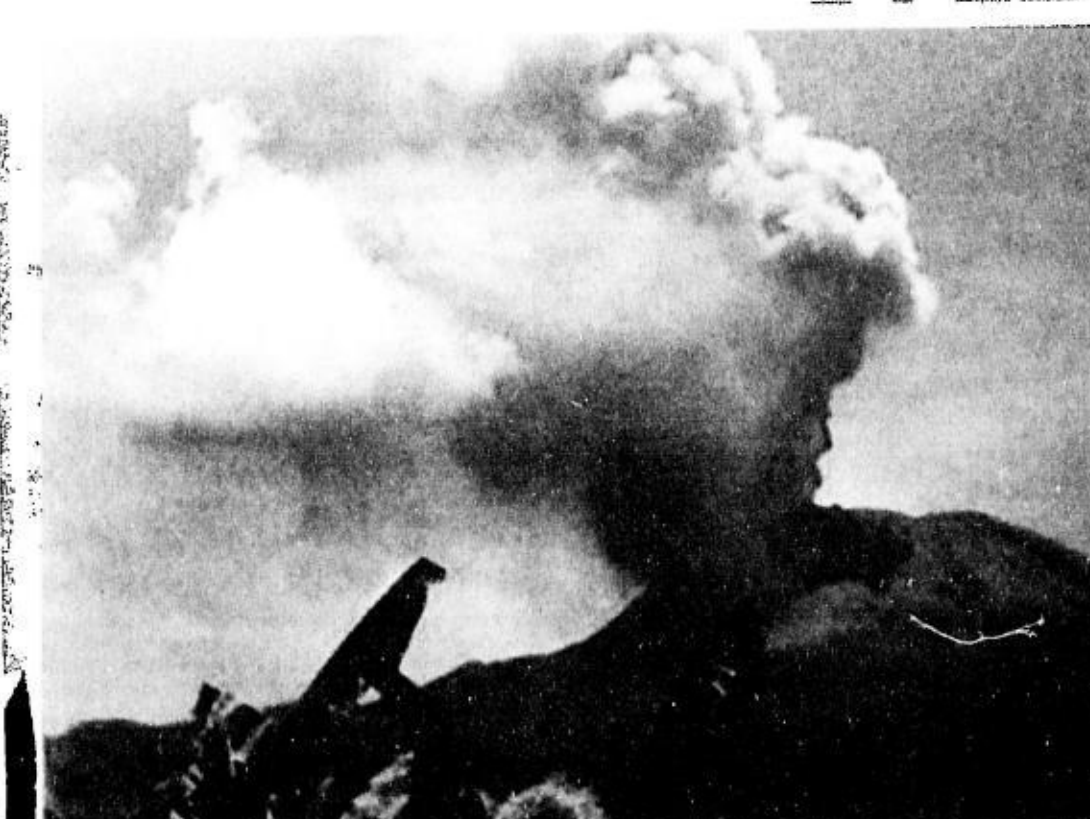
GREGORIO "Ka Roger" Rosal, Communist Party spokesperson, talks about power in Nepal. MAOIST/ A11

SOMEWHERE IN SOUTHERN Luzon—From his coconut leaf hut deep in the forest, Gregorio Rosal, one of the country's most wanted men, smiles in admiration at the recent success of Nepal's Maoist rebels.

"Their advance has been inspiring," the chief spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) told Reuters. "It's the protracted people's war that Mao practiced in China."

Nepal's rebels loosely aligned themselves with mainstream political parties and forced the autocratic king to cede power this week.

The CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, have been waging the world's longest communist insurgency. They want a similar tie-up with disgruntled soldiers and political opposition groups to oust President



STILL SIMMERING

For the second time in over a month, Mount Bulusan in Sorsogon spewed ash and steam during an eruption last Saturday. Government volcanologists have appealed to the public to report thieves who are taking their monitoring equipment. AP

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US: Corruption hindering RP antiterror campaign

By Nikko Dizon

THE US DEPARTMENT OF STATE has expressed concern over the rampant corruption at the Bureau of Customs and Immigration which could compromise the country's antiterror campaign and render it vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

In a report, the US said that corruption in these agencies had weakened the Philippines' border protection against the possible entry of suspected terrorists into the country.

"Understaffed customs and immigration offices, manned by undertrained and underpaid officials, are extremely vulnerable to corruption," the US state department said.

The Bureau of Customs oversees the entry and exit of import-

ed and exported goods at airports and seaports while the Bureau of Immigration monitors the movement of foreigners going in and out of the country.

In its report, the US state department also expressed alarm over the "growing cooperation" among Islamist terrorist organizations in the country, namely, the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and the Rajah Sulaiman Movement (RSM).

It is a "major, and disturbing, trend in the Philippines," the report said.

The US state department's latest assessment of the Philippines' fight against terrorism was included in its 2005 Country Reports on Terrorism released on April 28.

The state department's annual

country report is required by the US Congress to "provide an assessment of terrorism worldwide," according to the US Embassy website.

Aside from the lure of corruption, the report said the Philippines' border management system has been struggling against "poor physical and information technology infrastructure and insufficient capital and human resources; increased traffic and antiquated facilities that overburden airports and seaports."

Without elaborating, the report said the US "has made some headway in assisting the Philippines in border management systems."

The absence of an antiterrorism law, as well as the "restrictions in gathering evi-

dence," continue to be among the stumbling blocks in "building effective terrorism cases in the Philippines," the report noted.

The problems include "rampant corruption," "low morale" and "lack of cooperation between police and prosecutors," among others, the report said.

Another cause for concern, the report said, was the terrorists' "technically sophisticated explosive devices" which were used in various bombing incidents around the country last year.

Nevertheless, the report said, the Philippines had also made significant progress in its fight against terrorism last year, particularly with the arrest and conviction of several suspected terrorists.

Noli padlocks NorthRail settlers' homes

AT LEAST 10 HOUSES IN A RESETTLEMENT area for informal settlers were ordered padlocked the other day by Vice President Noli de Castro after he confirmed that these had been sold by their beneficiaries to non-qualified persons for the money.

A furious De Castro, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), directed the National Housing Authority to effect the closure order and evict the illegal residents.

De Castro ordered the closure

after inspecting the houses in Northville 5, Barangay Batia in Bocaue, Bulacan.

He also castigated those who sold their houses.

"Binalaan ko na kayo noon pero hindi kayo nakinig. Ngayon, kailangan ninyong pagsisihan ang inyong matitigas na ulo (I warned you before but you did not listen. Now, you have to suffer the consequences of your being hard-headed)," De Castro told those who had sold their new houses.

Earlier, the Vice President warned that the selling of houses in resettlement areas provided by the government under the NorthRail resettlement project was illegal.

Despite the lack of funds, he said, the government was still spending millions of pesos to provide housing for qualified beneficiaries in order for them to have decent lives.

But since some of the relocatees proved to be very stubborn, De Castro said, he had no other recourse but to impose the corre-

sponding penalty.

He said neither the seller nor the buyer of an illegally sold house in the relocation site would be spared from punishment because both would be evicted from the project.

He said the NHA would be more than glad to find other qualified beneficiaries to occupy the houses.

De Castro said that the selling and leasing of the houses awarded to beneficiaries violated the rules of the NorthRail relocation program. Cynthia D. Balana



HAND OF FRIENDSHIP

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo calls on Malaysia Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in the course of the 6th Philippines-Malaysia Joint Commission Meeting held recently in Kuala Lumpur. Romulo asked Malaysia to help the Philippines in its bid for observer status in the Organization of the Islamic Conference and thanked it for its important role in the GRP-MILF peace process.

Violence mars demolition at Subic shipyard project

By Allan Macatuno
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC, ZAMBALES—VIOLENCE broke out on Saturday when residents of Sitio Agusuhi here resisted the demolition of their homes at the construction site for the country's largest shipbuilding facility.

At least two persons were hurt, including a five-year-old girl, after they refused to leave their home while it was being demolished, said Resy Asero, a resident of the area.

The demolition of some public structures in the area also sparked a commotion between the residents and the demolition team.

The conflict erupted two days before the scheduled visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo for the groundbreaking ceremony of the shipbuilding project.

"They imposed a forced demolition of our houses despite our strong opposition. What will happen to us now?" Asero told the INQUIRER.

Some 200 residents formed a human barricade to prevent the entry of the demolition team. They refused to leave their houses until they were transferred to the relocation site.

The affected residents protest-

ed the failure of officials of Hanjin, a Korean shipping company, to provide proper compensation for their houses and the lack of a relocation area.

They also denounced the presence of soldiers in their village, saying this only added to the tension that had gripped the site since the start of construction in February.

Mayor Jeffrey Khonghun said they have started transferring residents to the relocation site in Sitio Mahumiling in Barangay Cawag here.

"At least 70 families have been relocated to the new site and we have started to build school buildings in time for the next school year," he said.

He said the local government of Subic was responsible for the relocation of more than 300 affected families that would be displaced by the project.

Hanjin has signed a \$1-billion (P51 billion) agreement with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority for the lease of the property for its shipyard here.

"The relocation site is now ready to accept these residents. We are just waiting for them to voluntarily leave their houses," Khonghun said.

South Korea gives more for children of veterans

SOUTH KOREA HAS DONATED A further \$100,000 (P5.1 million) to a scholarship program for dependents of Filipino soldiers who served during the Korean War in 1950-55.

South Korean Ambassador Hong Jong Ki recently turned the check over to Brig. Gen. Bienvenido Castro (ret.), president of the Peftok Veterans Association Inc. (PVAI) which is composed of Filipino Korean War veterans.

Peftok stands for Philippine Expeditionary Force to Korea. It consisted of five Battalion Combat Teams (BCTs) that helped defend South Korea from aggression by communist North Korea and China in 1950-53.

The Peftok Scholarship Program was launched in 1986 with seed money from the South Korean government. It has provided financial assistance to some 2,500 high school, college and vocational scholars, Castro said.

The PVAI implements the scholarship program through an academic board. Nine of the 10 Peftok scholars are girls.

Castro thanked the South Korean government for its continuing support of Filipino Korean War veterans. He said the PVAI had asked South Korea to also support other livelihood projects that would benefit the Peftok veterans and their dependents.

Hong, in turn, thanked the Philippines for helping defend his country and assured the veterans of South Korea's support. Over 100 Filipinos died while 400 more were wounded during the Korean War.

Hong and Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, commanding general of the Philippine Army, were the guests of honor at recent rites marking the 55th anniversary of the Battle of Yuldong, the biggest battle fought by Filipinos in the Korean War.

Esperon said Peftok set standards of gallantry that continue to inspire Filipino fighting men. He ordered that awards for valor and meritorious conduct earned by Peftok veterans that were never awarded be given out after a review of the records.

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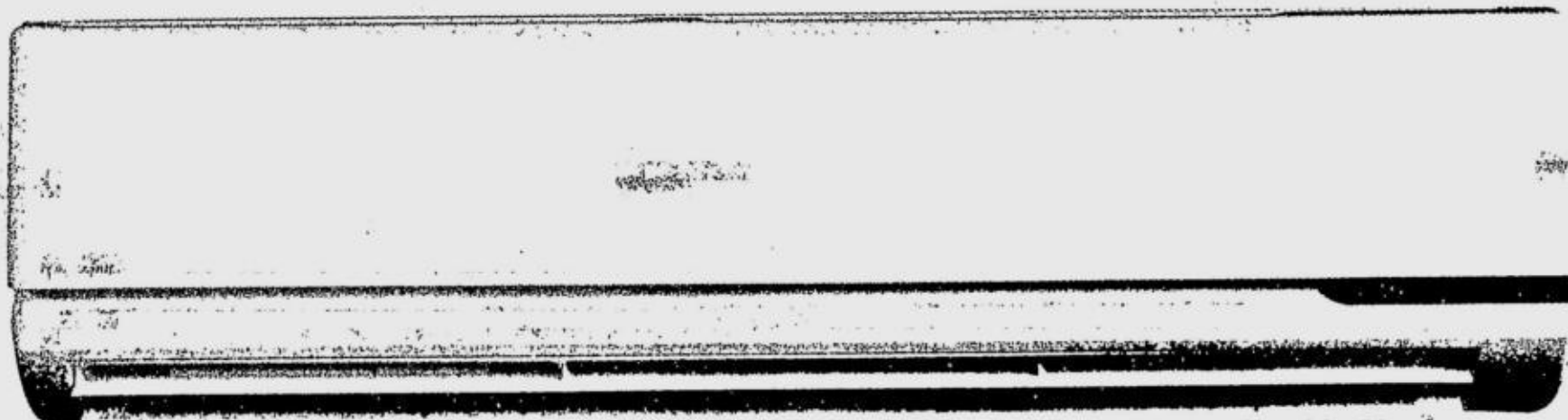
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Davao most competitive city—study

DAVAO CITY—THIS CITY WAS ADJUDGED anew the most competitive among the country's largest cities based on the 2005 Philippine Cities Competitiveness Ranking Project (PCCRP) conducted by the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Policy Center.

It was the second time the city drew the highest ranking in the PCCRP study, the first time being in 2002.

Also rated as competitive cities in the recent AIM study were Makati, Las Piñas, Marikina and Muntinlupa.

AIM professor Mario Lopez presented the study during last week's Mindanao Coalition for Transparent Governance (MCTAG) forum held at the Apo View Hotel here.

Lopez said the AIM study measured seven major "drivers" with corresponding indicators such as the cost of doing business, dynamism of local economy, linkages and accessibility, human resources and training, infrastructure, responsiveness of the city to business needs, and quality of life.

He said Davao City ranked first in the cost of doing business, second in both dynamism of local economy and linkages and accessibility. It was 3rd in infrastructure, 4th in quality of life, 6th in responsiveness to business needs, and 11th in human resources and training.

Lopez said the 2005 PCCRP study rated 65 cities in three categories—metropolitan, mid-size and small.

He said the city's poor performance in human resources and training might have been the result of the low ratio of its schools to the appropriateness of the courses offered.

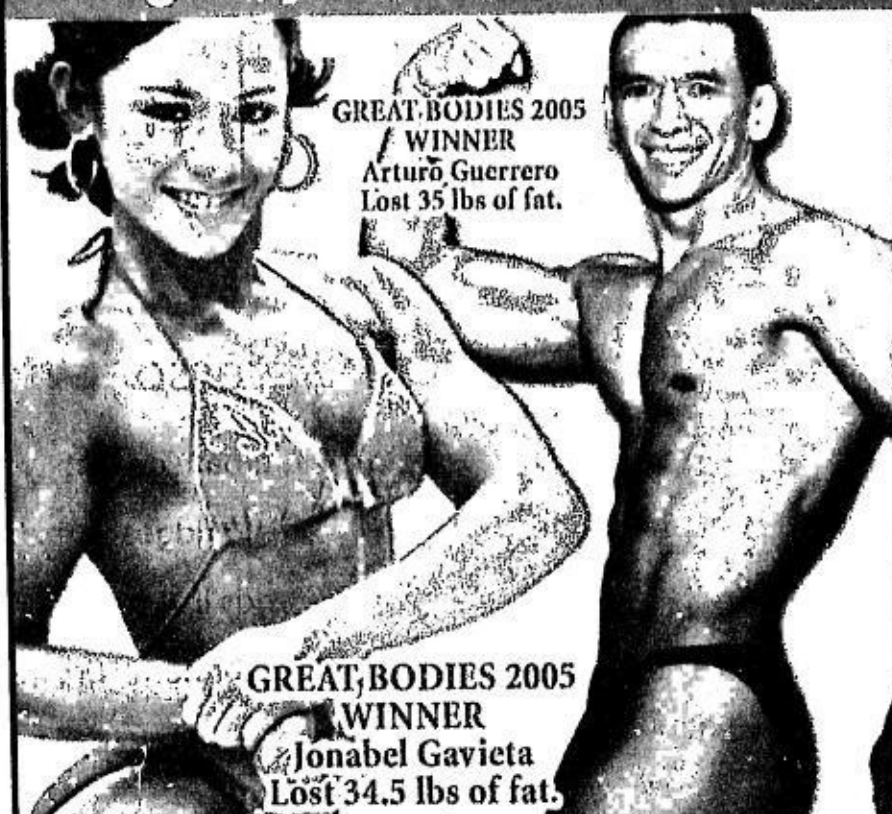
Roberto Teo, chief of the Davao City Investment Promotion Center, said the 2005 rating meant the city was headed in the right direction.

"With an average economy of P100 billion and an improving economic performance, the city will surely continue to be on top of other Philippine cities in terms of competitiveness," he said.

Lopez said the study showed that the most competitive mid-sized cities were Bacolod, Batangas, Iligan, Iloilo and San Fernando, Pampanga, and the most competitive small cities, Dagupan, Legazpi, Koronadal, Naga, Olongapo, San Fernando, La Union; Sta. Rosa, Surigao, Tagbilaran and Tagum. *Judy Quiros, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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'Maximo,' 'Masahista' top Italian gay film fest

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Entertainment

TWO FILIPINO DIGITAL MOVIES, "ANG PAG-dadala ni Maximo Oliveros" and "Masahista," won top awards at the 21st Turin International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival held in Italy from April 20 to 27. (See related story in *Inquirer Entertainment*, p. A2-1).

Ufo Pictures' "Maximo," directed by Aureus Solito and written by Michiko Yamamoto, won for Best Feature Film. Gee Entertainment and Centerstage's "Masahista," directed by Brillante Mendoza and written by Boots Agbayani Pastor, won the Audience Award in the video program.

"Turin is considered one of the biggest gay and lesbian film festivals in Europe, if not the world," Mendoza, who had just arrived in Manila, told the *Inquirer* in a phone interview. "It's of the same caliber as the Outfest in Los Angeles, where 'Masahista' was also invited."

Mendoza attended the week-long event in Italy and was present at the awards ceremony held at the Multisala Teatro Nuovo on April 27.

He described his win as "unexpected... The program director Cosimo Santoro told me that audience members didn't usually fill up the feedback forms after a screening," Mendoza said. "But they made an exception for 'Masahista' and gave it their unanimous vote."

He said the Turin film fest was fun. "There was a tribute to [gay icon] Cher and the presenters at the awards show were drag queens," Mendoza said.

Apart from the gay and lesbian festival, Turin is also famous for the Shroud of Turin, an ancient relic believed by the Catholic faithful to have been the burial cloth used to wrap the body of Jesus Christ.

Mendoza also accepted the award on behalf of "Maximo," after director Solito's speech sent in a letter was read at the ceremony.

"Solito said that 'Maximo' was a film of sharing, that the cast and crew shared their talents in making the movie," Mendoza said.

In the citation, Turin's international jury lauded "Maximo" for going "beyond the confines of sexual identity to tell a story of familiar love, brotherhood and acceptance. This amazing film takes us into a world we rarely see to present an honest and insightful portrait of a lower-class family in crisis. Twelve-year-old Maxi leads us on an incredible journey of self-discovery as he blossoms into maturity with the help and love of his father and brothers."

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Monday, May 1, 2006

Joseph, the Worker

1st Reading: Gen 1:26-2:3 (or Col 3:14-15, 17, 23-24)

Gospel: Matthew 13:54-58

Jesus went to his hometown and taught the people in their synagogue. They were amazed and said, "Where did he get this wisdom and these special powers? Isn't he the carpenter's son? Isn't Mary his mother and aren't James, Joseph, Simon and Judas his brothers? Aren't all his sisters living here? How did he get all this?" And so they took offense at him.

Jesus said to them, "The only place where prophets are not welcome is their hometown and in their own family." And he did not perform many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

Commentary

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Jesus is the son of Joseph the carpenter, who worked to keep Jesus alive, protecting him and Mary from violence, breaking the law to save their lives and provide for them. Today we honor Joseph who adopted Jesus, the son of God as his own beloved son, and taught him how to be a man—a human being and a Jew—how to walk the earth with us. That was his work and ours too.

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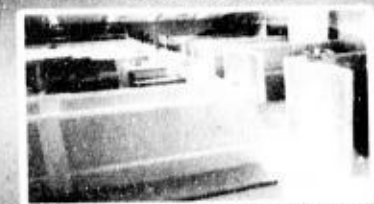
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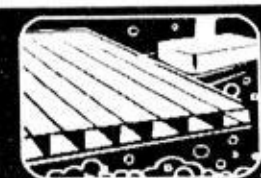
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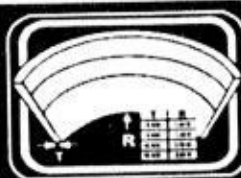


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6.0mm	1,415	2,825	3,355	1,060	2,120	2,514	2,475	4,945	5,865
8.0mm	1,727	3,450	4,097	1,151	2,298	2,721	2,645	5,290	6,350
10.0mm	1,955	3,906	4,637	1,297	2,594	3,083	3,225	6,445	7,760
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Globe raps Spain giving RP \$40M in development aid

Smart over text spams

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE RIVALRY FOR MARKET SUPREMACY among the country's cellular phone networks is turning nasty.

Over the weekend, Globe Telecom Inc. complained to its main rival, Smart Communications Inc., about the latter's alleged malpractices.

In particular, the Ayala-controlled Globe assailed Smart for allegedly trying to entice clients to switch service providers by sending unsolicited text messages over the former's network.

"It has come to our attention, through numerous complaints of our subscribers, that Smart is sending spam text messages or unsolicited and unwanted commercial and promotional advertisements to our subscribers," Globe's head of regulatory affairs V. Froilan M. Castelo said in a letter to Smart's chief legal counsel Enrico L. Español.

One such message allegedly read: "Ds s {name} agent of Smart. Gus2 nyo po libre SIM w/free unlmtd txt? Txt nyo lang name?adres/sim brand sa 09217659289 at ippdla SIM. Try nyo totoo po to. Tnx!"

Another message allegedly from Smart read: "HelloDs s {name} agent ng Smart po. Ppdhan po naming kyo ng free Smart prepaid simcard via courier. Free delivery po ito. Txt lang po your name/address/sim brand to 09217659289 para mpadala naming sim nyo. Libre ito! Kung may tanong kyo, text CALL to same number at twgan po naming kayo. Thank you."

"Please take note that this is in violation of National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) memorandum circular 03-03-2005 on the rules and regulations on broadcast message service," Castelo said in his letter.

Section 3.1 of the NTC memorandum says that commercial and promotional advertisements, surveys and other broadcast or "push" messages should be sent only to subscribers who have given prior consent or have specifically opted to receive [the] said messages.

Sought for comment by the INQUIRER, Smart spokesperson Mon Isberto said he had neither read Globe's letter of complaint nor spoken to Español, who is the only party authorized to speak on the issue.

He said Smart will reply to the issue raised by its main rival by Tuesday at the earliest.

BARCELONA—SPAIN IS EXTENDING more than \$40 million in development assistance to the Philippines over the next three years, Ambassador Lani Bernardo told Speaker Jose de Venecia here during the latter's recent visit.

De Venecia came to this city with other Filipino legislators from Madrid where they met with leaders of both Spain's ruling Socialist Party and the Partido Popular headed by former Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar.

De Venecia said the Spanish govern-

ment had made the Philippines a "priority country" for development, quoting the Spain's Chamber of Deputies Speaker Manuel Marin of the Socialist Party and Casa Asia, a development unit of the Spanish foreign ministry, which is eyeing expanded cultural ties between Spain and the Philippines.

Speaking in the regional parliament in this city, De Venecia proposed a Catalonia-Philippines industrial park in the Philippines and a special zone for the entry of small- and medium-scale Spanish

enterprises into the Asia-Pacific market.

De Venecia also invited major construction companies and housing developers in Madrid and Barcelona to participate in housing programs in the Philippines, where the housing backlog has ballooned to 3-4 million and is still growing.

"A major housing program for the poor is one of President Macapagal-Arroyo's major priorities," De Venecia told the Spaniards.

De Venecia's party included Representatives Conrado Estrella III, Gene-

roso Tulagan and Arthur Celeste.

Earlier in Madrid, De Venecia appealed to the leaders of the Socialist Party and Partido Popular for support for his debt-for-equity conversion program to finance major antipoverty programs in some 100 heavily indebted countries.

In the Philippines De Venecia said, the Spanish government could convert the country's debt to Spain into debt for mass housing as well as for reforestation, education, agriculture, irrigation and tourism projects.

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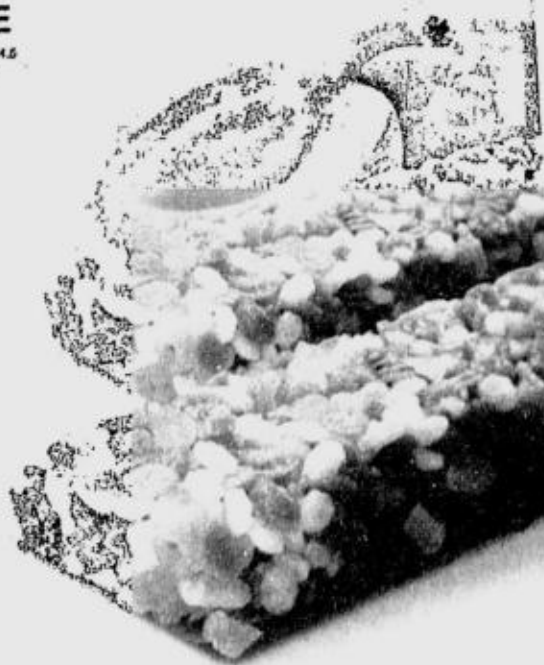
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Unicef chides RP media for reports on minors

By Volt Contreras

PHILIPPINE PRINT AND BROADCAST MEDIA continue to violate the guidelines set by the government on reporting about children, according to a study commissioned by the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

Unicef Senior Program Officer Colin Davis said that among the "disturbing findings" of the study was the tendency of most editors "to avoid stories involving children because of the perceived complications it entails."

Always identified

The study, which covered print and television in Metro Manila, Cebu City and Davao City, showed that minors figuring in reports—whether as victims, witnesses or aggressors—continue to be identified in violation of media guidelines for children.

In a press statement, Unicef yesterday warned that the identification of minors

in news reports could compromise their safety.

"The full names of child abuse survivors and children in conflict with the law were sometimes published, or enough details about their parents, residence or schools were given so that their identities could be pieced together," the statement said.

Lack of awareness

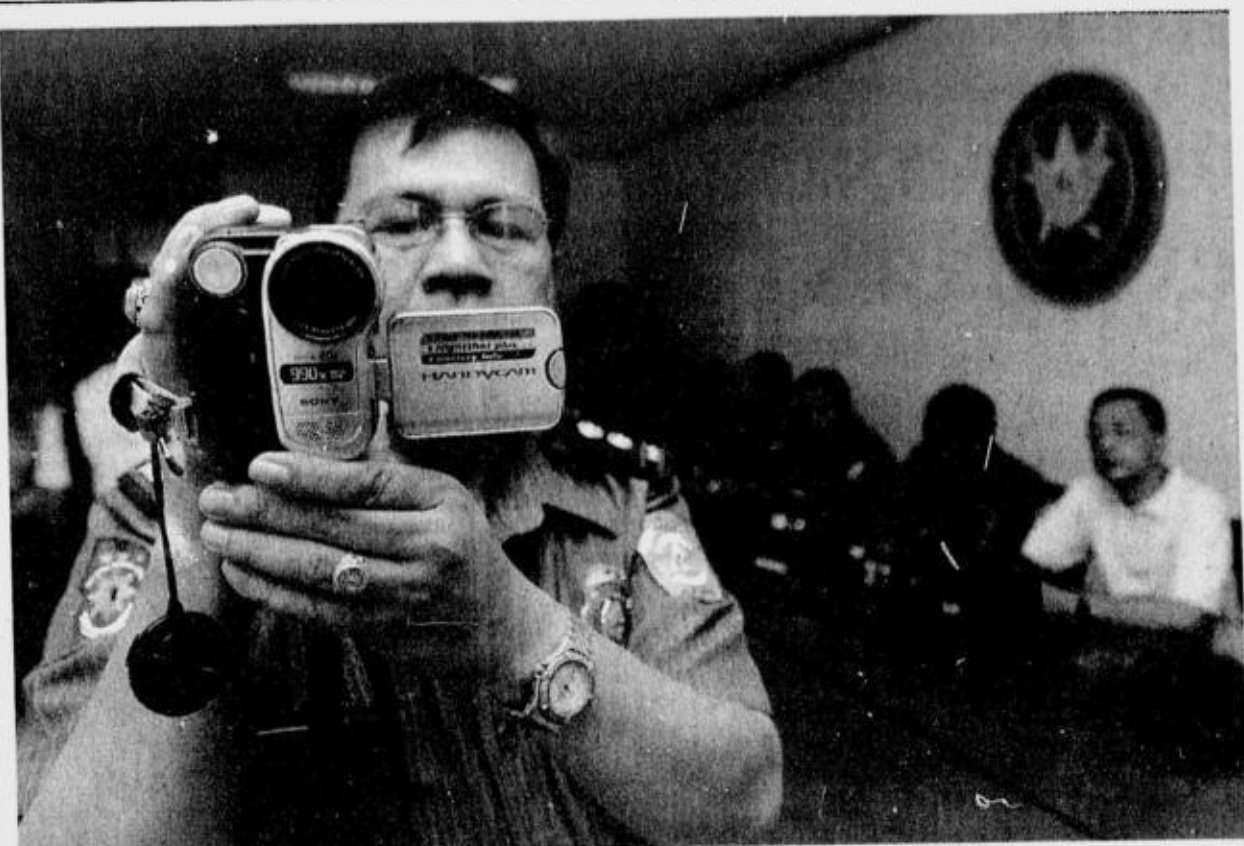
Davis said these persistent violations may be due to the lack of awareness among Filipino journalists of the media guidelines for children which were set by the Department of Justice in 1999.

Other findings were:

- Judgmental words such as drunk, epileptic, fugitive, escapees and rugby addicts were used to describe children;
- Children continued to be featured in articles for fund-raising purposes, which could result in potential exploitative situations;
- Only a few articles attempted to raise awareness of the causes and problems affecting children, and there were none offering possible solutions;
- Actual interviews of children were rare and, on occasions that they were interviewed, these were unsupervised by adults;
- Majority of the reporters covered by the study were found not to be abiding by the journalistic standard of using two or more sources in developing stories.

Davis bared the findings of the studies during the 5th Unicef-Philippine Press Institute Child-Friendly Newspaper and Journalist Awards ceremony held in Manila last week.

Unicef was assisted in the study by the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communications and by the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility.



LEARNING TO SHOOT

A policeman learns to use a video camera in order to "shoot" the rallies set for today by groups marking Labor Day and protesting the presidency of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The cameras would provide recorded evidence should cases be filed against either the ralliers or police in connection with the expected assemblies. The unidentified policeman belongs to Station 10 in Kamuning, Quezon City.

RAFFY LERMA

Industrial hazards take toll on reproductive health—study

By Jerome Aning

CHEMICALS, RADIATION AND WORK-related stress have taken their toll on the reproductive health of women working in the industrial sector, according to a non-government organization.

In a recent study, the Manila-based Institute of Occupational Health and Safety Development said the three occupational hazards endangered women's reproductive processes, sexual functions, pregnancy and maternal conditions.

IOHSD surveyors examined 361 women working in two semiconductor plants and one garment manufacturing firm. Their findings were linked to known theories and propositions already set by scientific and medical studies on occupational hazards associated with adverse reproductive outcomes.

More involved, responsible

In an interview, IOHSD executive director Noel Colina called on workers to be more involved in health issues at work and for employers to be more responsible and responsive to workers' reproductive issues.

Workers' unions should participate and get greater representation in health and safety committees in their companies, Colina said.

Employers should periodically conduct checkups among their workers and assist those found to be ill in paying for their medication and therapy.

Colina said two labor department agencies should also be given more funds in addressing workers' reproductive health: The Occupational Safety and Health Administration so that it could conduct more studies and inspections, and the Employees' Compensation Commission so that it could give more financial assistance to workers.

The government should also discourage companies from making women take the night shift so they would not be exposed to additional health hazards.

Adverse effects

The study showed that the female workers had been exposed to two types of industrial chemicals—mutagenic and teratogenic—which had adverse effects on their reproductive health.

Mutagenic chemicals are known to produce physical abnormalities in the genetic apparatus of the cell. This may result in disease and may affect reproductive cells—whether sperm or ova.

Teratogenic chemicals may enter a pregnant woman's blood stream and cross the placenta barrier to affect a developing fetus. This may result in spontaneous abortion (miscarriage), reduced birth weight, congenital abnormalities (damage to organs or limbs), or brain or cell damage which could later result in cancer.

Mutagenic and teratogenic chemicals include: Acrylonitriles, aniline, anesthetic gases, arsenic compounds, benzene, benzo(a)pyrene, beryllium, boron

(boric acid), cadmium, carbon disulphide, carbon monoxide, chlordane, chloroform, chloroprene, dichloromethane, epichlorohydrin, ethylene oxide, formaldehyde (formalin), hexachlorobenzene, lead (organic/inorganic), methyl ethyl ketone, monomethylformamide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, selenium and compounds, thallium, toluene, vinyl chloride and xylene.

At risk

According to the IOHSD, studies on the effects on the female workers' exposure to these toxicants or poisonous chemicals were a delicate matter because two persons could be at risk: The woman, and if she is pregnant, her developing offspring.

Maternal exposure to a toxicant may cause infertility, menstrual disorders, illness during pregnancy, chromosome aberrations, early onset of menopause and suppressed libido.

Adverse fetal outcomes include pre-term delivery, fetal loss, perinatal death, low birth weight, altered sex ratio, congenital malformations, childhood malignancies, infant or childhood illness, chromosome aberrations and developmental disabilities.

Other effects of the toxicants include menstrual cycle variability, spontaneous abortion, preeclampsia and miscarriage.

The study also found two types of dangerous radiation that women workers had been exposed to. One was ionizing radiation which is the type of radiation that is higher in frequency than visible light. The other was non-ionizing radiation whose frequency is lower than visible light.

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Peasants ask GMA to solve killings in Negros

By Blanche Rivera

PEASANT GROUPS YESTERDAY URGED President Macapagal-Arroyo to address the numerous killings of farmer-leaders who had been pushing for the implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program in the country.

Task Force Mapalad (TFM), which has more than 300 affiliate organizations nationwide, sought the President's intervention in solving the killings of farmer-beneficiaries and community organizers in Negros Occidental.

"We call on President Arroyo to look into these cases of killings and violence against farmer beneficiaries so that the perpetrators can be brought to justice and the victims can have hope for peace," TFM spokesperson Edna Sobrecaray said.

The TFM made the appeal to the President when she visited Bacolod City for the "Panaad" festival. The group said Malacañang's intervention would be decisive in ending violence against peasant leaders in the province.

Six members of the TFM have been killed since 2001, most of them working in haciendas whose workers had been organized by the peasant group.

"The longer the land disputes remain unresolved, the more the farmer-beneficiaries become vulnerable to violence. We call on the President to ensure speedy distribution of CARP-covered hacienda lands," she said.

The killings of farmer-leaders were related to unresolved conflicts over the distribution of Negros haciendas, whose owners continue to resist the coverage of their lands under CARP.

The Department of Agrarian Reform has distributed 3.8 million hectares of the targeted 4.5 million hectares to be covered by CARP. Majority of the remaining 700,000 hectares are in Negros Occidental, where landowners have engaged the government in a legal battle to keep their lands.

"Farmers claiming ownership rights to hacienda lands placed under coverage of CARP are continuously subjected to threats, harassment, dismissal (from jobs), physical assault

and, when all these are not enough, assassination," Sobrecaray said.

TFM members Ronilo Vasquez of Hacienda Cambukot, Ronito Boltron of Hacienda Mulawin, Teresa Mameng of Hacienda Conchita Villanueva, Edgardo Cauntoy of Hacienda Nella/Maniacalao, Agustin Flores of Hacienda Isabela were killed between 2001 and 2004.

Another farmer-leader, Rico Adeva, was shot dead by still unidentified assailants in Silay City two weeks ago.

Three other agrarian reform activists from other peasant groups were killed this month.

The TFM also asked the DAR to immediately install farmer-beneficiaries who had certificates of land ownership award but could not occupy the lands due to resistance from landowners.

She cited the case of farmer-beneficiaries at the 478-ha Hacienda Velez-Malaga, owned by former Marcos crony Roberto Cuenca. The 102 beneficiaries who have received their CLOAs since 2001 have failed to occupy a 144-ha portion of the hacienda because of Cuenca's guards.

The government has only until 2008 to complete the acquisition and distribution of private lands under CARP With Alda Franz C. Quodala (trainee)

Pinoys don't eat enough veggies, UN study shows

By Dennis Jay C. Santos
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—MOST FILIPINOS STILL DO not eat their vegetables, which makes them miss out on most nutrients.

"The vegetable consumption of Filipinos is very low," said Roger Gualberto, president of the Vegetable Industry Council of Southern Mindanao (VISCIMIN), citing a study conducted by the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Gualberto said the FAO had found that an average Filipino ate only 40 kilos of vegetables a year, a far cry from the ideal vegetable consumption of 100 kilos per person.

"We are only eating 40 kilos per year. That is below the FAO requirement," Gualberto told the INQUIRER on the sidelines of the 4th National Vegetable Congress here last week.

Gualberto attributed Filipinos' low vegetable consumption to a "lack of awareness" of the benefits of eating greens.

He said that because of this, his group was trying to promote the eating of more veggies.

Gualberto said vegetables were cheaper than fish, meat and poultry products and contained the same amounts, if not more, of vitamins and minerals.

Besides, vegetables were healthier than red meat and poultry, which are associated with numerous diseases, he said.

Maoist gains in Nepal ...

From page A1

Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We call that united front tactics; that is also what we are trying to do," said Rosal, alias Ka Roger, in his first face-to-face interview with the foreign media since the 1980s.

Ms Arroyo has accused the CPP and NPA of colluding with her political foes and renegade soldiers in an alleged bid to oust her in February.

The Arroyo administration considers communist guerrillas its top security threat, ahead of Moro rebels in Mindanao.

Rosal, who was one of 49 people charged with rebellion for the alleged coup attempt against Ms Arroyo, denies there was a plot or that an alliance exists between the NPA and disillusioned members of the Armed Forces, the sworn enemy of the communists.

Erstwhile foes

But the NPA is ready to align itself with its erstwhile foes if it means Ms Arroyo could be overthrown and replaced by a government which includes left-wing groups.

Rosal, his M-16 rifle within arm's reach in his hideout in Luzon, said a more sympathetic administration could lead to the revival of peace talks.

Previous discussions between communist leaders and representatives of the Arroyo administration, which were brokered by Norway, stalled in August 2004 when Manila refused to help persuade Washington and some European states to remove the CPP and NPA from their blacklists of terrorist organizations.

Despite the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and China's embrace of free-wheeling capitalism, the NPA continues to wage an insurgency that started in 1969 as successive administrations have failed to deal with social inequalities and widespread poverty.

Fighting between rebels and government forces has killed more than 40,000 people and stunted economic development.

Even so, Rosal still has fire in his belly. He has to constantly keep on the move to avoid capture and he has not seen his wife in almost two years.

"The future is very good," said the 58-year-old guerrilla, unperturbed by China's conversion to capitalism and adamant that the NPA's own ideological commitment is steadfast.

Capitalizing on coup fears in Manila, communist rebels have increased attacks on remote police stations and businesses since the start of the year.

Rosal, who keeps himself up-to-date on world affairs via a radio strapped to his waist, puts the NPA

membership at around 8,000. He dismissed government claims that the NPA has lost 900 fighters since the start of the year. Reuters

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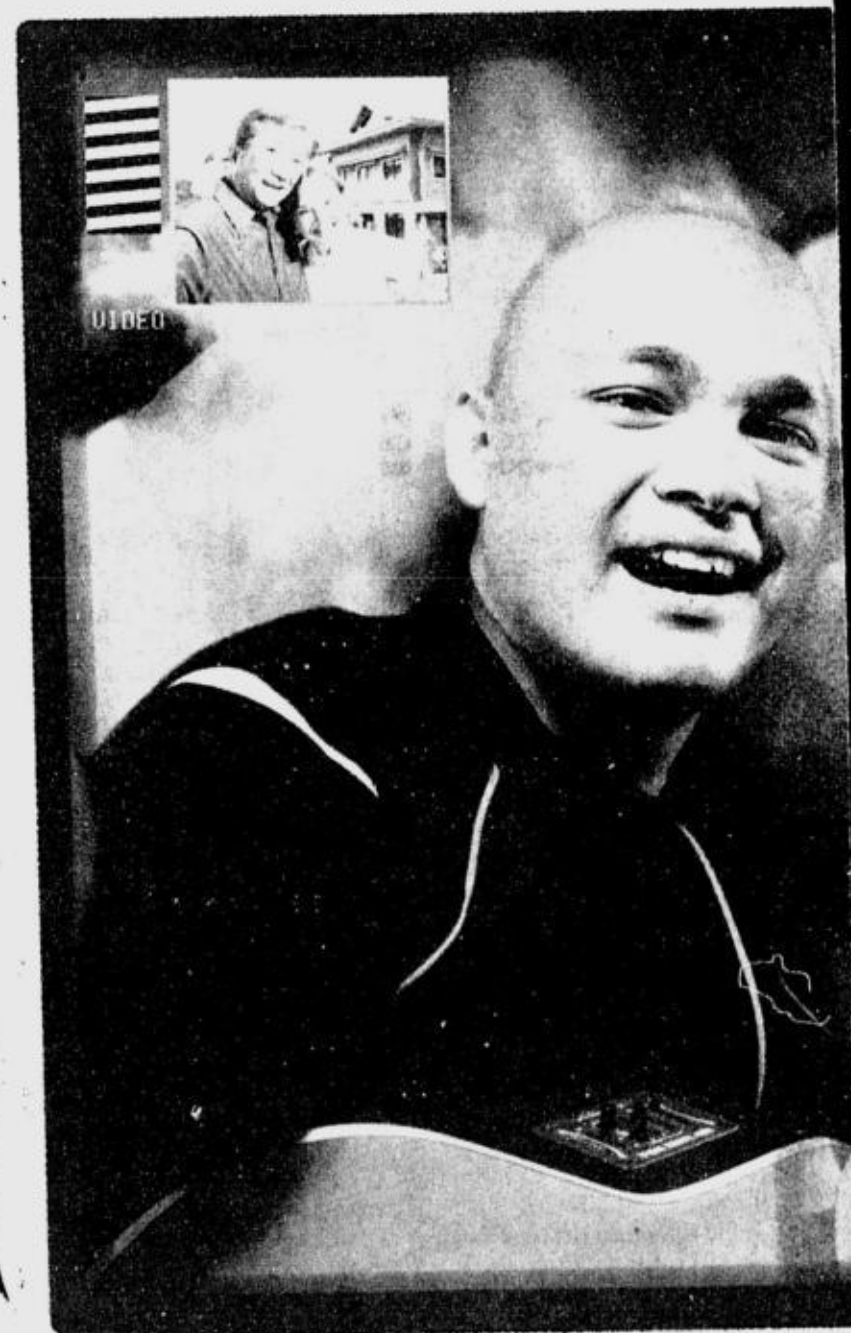


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Bunker mentality

ON THE EVE OF THE EXPECTED RELEASE of the Supreme Court decision on the constitutionality of Presidential Proclamation 1017, the administration sounded out that it is preparing one last hurrah. The Cabinet had decided to hunker down in Malacañang today, Secretary Michael Defensor said. The group will be monitoring the Labor Day demonstrations and will see whether they go beyond the ritual demonstrations proclaiming the rights and interests of the working class.

EDITORIAL From within the ranks of protesters themselves has come a warning: the workers intend to see just how "maximum tolerance"—as enjoined by the Supreme Court in its recent decision on the calibrated preemptive response—would be exercised by the Arroyo administration. Administration officials say that the President might proclaim a state of national emergency. Whether or not she'd push through with the proclamation, or whether or not the situation would evolve to warrant such a proclamation, is beside the point.

By boldly—and baldly—announcing that the administration intends to resort to an executive action the legality of which is still to be decided by the Supreme Court, the President's men have clearly demonstrated how they regard the powers of the presidency and the law. Theirs is an attitude of extreme pragmatism verging on the cynical.

In people's minds, there are two principal questions concerning Proclamation 1017. First, does the President have the power to make such a proclamation? Second, were the actions taken by the military, police and government lawyers in implementing Proclamation 1017 permissible?

Let us even assume, as some lawyers have suggested, that the Court would declare that it is for the President to determine if there is enough basis to declare a state of emergency; but at the same time, it would rule that the arrests, detentions, dispersals, surveillance and other actions taken by the government by force of Proclamation 1017 were neither justified nor authorized. Such a decision would still be a legal setback for the President.

On the other hand, the readiness to re-impose a state of emergency only shows that the present administration has neither regrets nor the intention to atone for the alleged excesses committed in the name of 1017. That is bad enough.

And judging from statements coming from Malacañang, the possibility that the administration would seek to repeat today what it did on Feb. 24 is very real. We would then be in a situation, where an executive proclamation—whose legality or illegality has yet to be resolved by the Supreme Court—will be repeated, most likely to be accompanied by the same repressive acts that attended the first one.

Where would be the judicial, or even moral, relief in a Supreme Court decision reversing the decision of the President? Or is the President supremely assured of a favorable verdict? If so, what would that say of the executive and judicial branches?

While the three branches of government are theoretically independent of each other, that would give the impression that, in reality, what the executive does could have serious consequences for the two others.

With its saber-rattling, the administration has again put in question the executive branch's regard for the rule of law, or for the judiciary. This is as unfortunate as it is irresponsible on the part of the President's official family.

Why will some Filipinos be out on the streets today? Because they believe they have a right to do so, and they have grievances that impel them to do so. As Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales recently suggested, in a world ruled by a basic adherence to social justice, workers would not have to agitate for their rights and an improvement in their standard of living. But that world has yet to exist; and if there are workers who are compelled by their interests to protest, it is indeed their right to do so.

If those protesting intend to find out whether the Supreme Court's writ is indeed law, or is toothless as far as the executive branch is concerned, then who is to blame? Filipino workers have been observing Labor Day on May 1 of every year for over a century. Every president has survived each one of them. That the present incumbent seems not as confident about this day as her predecessors were says everything about her claims to having improved the lives and standard of living of the Filipino worker.



Respect is earned, not forced on others

I WATCHED THE TELEVISION SHOW "Debate" before the weekend, and I was irritated by the way the government officials in the panel pounced on Maria Theresa Pangilinan, the student leader who heckled President Macapagal-Arroyo during the graduation ceremonies at the Cavite State University. The debate's question was: "Which should have priority, the citizen's right to protest or respect for the President?"

The question was, of course, a no-brainer. Surely, a citizen's right to protest comes first. But Rep. Monico Puentevella and Cavite Vice Gov. Jonvic Remulla repeatedly needed Pangilinan, saying respect for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo should have prevented her from shouting "Patalisikin si GMA" (oust GMA) and unfurling banners expressing the same sentiment while the President was delivering her speech.

Where is your respect for the President, they asked the girl who bravely stood her ground and replied that she was expressing an opinion, which was—and still is—her right.

The correct answer to that question should have been: "None!" Respect is earned, not forced. You cannot force others to respect you if you are not respectable. How can you respect anybody caught cheating to "win" the elections? How can you respect somebody who does not fulfill her promises? How can you respect someone who shamelessly and repeatedly violates the Constitution she has sworn to defend? How can you respect anybody who prevents government officials from testifying in investigations that may reveal shenanigans in her administration? How can you respect anybody who is desperately trying to change the Constitution to stay in power?

And look who's talking? We can throw the charge of lack of respect back to GMA. She showed lack of respect for the people by stealing the presidency from the person they elected. She fooled the people by making false promises. She made the lives of the people more miserable by imposing more and more taxes. She has even tried and keeps on trying to prevent them from speaking out their opinions and feelings.

TODAY DOESN'T JUST MARK THE umpteenth anniversary of Labor Day, it marks the fifth anniversary of something of special significance in these harried times. That is the so-called "Edsa III," the mammoth gathering of the—by all means figurative—Great Unshod at the Edsa Shrine that culminated in the riots in Mendiola.

What is the significance of that event today? Doubtless, Erap's supporters will recall it as the real Edsa, the one that manifested true People Power, which is the power of the *masa*, the poor and thereto powerless, who are the majority of the population of this country. Doubtless, too, they will interpret it as the refutation of the idea that Edsa II represented real "People Power," and a confirmation of their argument that Edsa II was simply an elite coup, wrought with the help of the middle class, against a perfectly legitimate and pro-poor president.

The truth is a little more complicated than that. There is no doubt, with his landslide victory, that Erap was a perfectly legitimate president, just as there is no doubt, with the "Hello Garci" tape, that GMA is not. None of that means that the effort to impeach Erap, on the ground of having betrayed the public trust, had no popular support. That overlooks, as I've repeatedly pointed out, the impact of the impeachment trial, or more to the point, the airing of the impeachment trial on TV, which had the most popular *telenovelas* of the time biting its dust. That wasn't just watched by the middle class, it was watched by the *masa*, who debated it at length, often violently, in drinking sprees in narrow alleys in crowded slums. That was what turned Erap from hero to heel, not unlike the storyline of his own action movies.

"Edsa III" was about Erap, but it also went past Erap. The Edsa II forces, many of whom ended up in GMA's government, heaped scorn on "Edsa III" for variously being an anachronism, an atavism, a throwback to the past, or as Bishop Socrates Villegas (who violently protested its being held at the Edsa Shrine), said, a desecration of hallowed ground. But

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz



Pangilinan is not alone in having no respect for GMA. Millions of Filipinos feel the same way. And GMA has nobody to blame but herself. Caught with her hand in the cookie jar, she refuses to face the music and accept her punishment. Instead, she dodges the issue and uses every trick available to prevent the truth from coming out. How can you respect a person like that?

Even if millions of sycophants call a person "honorable," if he or she does not have honor, the title will mean nothing. "Honorable" is a word that has lost meaning in our vocabulary. All congressmen are addressed as "honorable," but are they? Judges and members of investigating committees are addressed as "Your Honor," but what honor do they mean? Ambassadors are called "Excellency" but what's so excellent with many of them?

A survey has shown that Filipinos are now very deficient in English. One reason for this could be: We keep using words that have lost meaning. For better English, we should expunge the word "honorable" from our vocabulary because it doesn't mean anything anymore, especially when it refers to congressmen and public officials.

Going back to "Debate," Puentevella insisted that Pangilinan should have waited for the proper time and place to voice her protest. I don't agree.

In the present repressive regime, any time and place and opportunity to air a protest is the right time. Nobody can easily get close to GMA, surrounded as she is with her storm troopers at all times. She won't listen to anything that is not favorable to her anyway. You have to be quick and seize every opportunity to get her attention. Which was what Pangilinan did. She got GMA's attention and ear. And

that of the nation, too.

And finally, Pangilinan is the employer of the President, one of the millions of citizens paying her generous salary and other perks, as well as those of her retinue. The President and her assistants are the servants of the people. Therefore, the people, Pangilinan among them, have the right to tell her what they think of her. As employer, they have the right to fire her. And that is what they have been telling her all along—they want her to resign.

*** The people of Quezon City are behind their mayor, Feliciano Belmonte, in his efforts to prevent gambling in the city. But what is this nation coming to? It is the gambling operators who are suing the mayor for not letting them operate outlets for the Small Town Lottery (which is now the polite name for *jueteng*) in the city. The operators are asking for P11 million in damages. Did they pay the filing fee? Courts do not recognize the amount of damages asked unless the complainant has paid the filing fee.

The operators want the court to issue a temporary restraining order against Mayor Belmonte, Pacifico Maghacot Jr., chief of the business permit and licensing office, and city police chief Nicasio Radovan Jr. What is there to restrain? They are not doing anything that they should be restrained from. On the contrary, the operators want the city government to do something—give them a business permit, which is the prerogative of the city government, not anybody else's, *di ba?*

The operators say they have a franchise to operate from the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office. But anybody doing business in a certain place needs a business permit from the local government of that place. And the STL operators have none in QC. All other PCSO outlets in QC, like lotto outlets, have to secure business permits. What makes STL operators different?

"STL should be test-run only in cities that welcome it," said Mayor Belmonte. But it is not welcome in QC. There was no *jueteng* in QC before, why should it have STL now?

Silent rage

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



that was because they reduced it to a simple and irrational support for a fallen idol. There was, of course, that element, too. It was a spontaneous support for a fallen idol, one who, after having been downed, was being kicked on the ground. The image of Erap being finger-printed in a local precinct proved a most explosive one. And Erap's lieutenants, of course, were prominently in display at the Edsa Shrine goading the throng—which was easily bigger than the one that flocked at Edsas I and II—to "Sugod! Sugod!" Malacañang and throw Gloria out. Not the least of those lieutenants were Miriam Santiago and Juan Ponce Enrile, who after "Edsa III" failed flew to GMA's side and metamorphosed into her undying faithful.

But "Edsa III" was far more than that, which is why I've always put the term in quotation marks, because of its *mestizo* quality. Beneath its seeming irrationality was something perfectly understandable, beneath its seeming bizarreness was something completely sane. Which is why it has something to say to us, especially today. Beneath "Edsa III's" surface support for Erap was a deep-seated explosion of the wrath of the poor over their lot. It was, as I said then, the "social volcano" exploding. Everyone had warned of it before martial law: The social volcano—created by the divide between the "spectacularly rich and the spectacularly poor," as Ninoy Aquino put it, was near to exploding. It happened much much later, in "Edsa III."

To put it another way, beneath the farce of support for Erap in "Edsa III" lay the force of the revolt of the masses in "Edsa III." Beneath the Eraption was the Eruption.

That anger hasn't gone, notwithstanding that the riots at Mendiola were quelled, and the possibility that the revolt of the masses would be repeated remains. It can be stoked easily, which is also its danger. It can be set aflame just as easily by false prophets as real ones. The lot of the poor hasn't improved, it has worsened, especially under GMA where the scale of pillage has reached staggering proportions (given an image by the face and body of Pidal), restrained only by the finitude of things left to steal.

Traditionally, several things have served as safety valves allowing the magma in the social volcano to seethe without spitting its fiery venom out. Work abroad, faith in Providence and gambling are three of them. But there are limits to the restraining power of all three. There are limits to how many jobs we can get abroad, and as the Asian Development Bank has warned, the export of skilled labor has vicious consequences in the immediate future. Faith in Providence has not exactly deterred the poor from taking to crime, faith in this country having bizarre, cultist interpretations and expressions to begin with. And as to gambling, well, the stampede at the PhilSports Arena shows what happens when people's hopes are dashed while they are desperately trying to get a crack at salvation.

Rep. Joey Salceda, a government economic adviser, has already warned of a "silent rage" over oil as a result of spiraling oil prices. The "silent rage" goes much deeper and farther than over oil. It has been seething over the years, now being stoked to near-eruption by a hugely unpopular usurper whose appetite for wealth and power has had no peer since Marcos.

We keep talking about the promise of another Edsa, it's time we talked about the threat of another "Edsa." May 1 is a particularly good time to do that, being both Labor Day and the day of the Mendiola riots, a day for thinking about workers and a day for thinking about the poor, who are often one and the same.

Hell hath no fury than the desperate scorned.

Who really won?

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.



THE SUPREME COURT STRUCK DOWN significant portions of Executive Order 464 as unconstitutional and declared that the "calibrated preventive response" (CPR) against protest movements has no place in the constitutional firmament. The response coming from government lawyers has been that, contrary to the thinking of the uninitiated, the decisions were really a victory for the government. It is a highly amusing reaction crying for careful calibration.

Start with EO 464. What principally drove members of the Senate up the wall were portions of Sections 2 and 3 of the executive order. These provisions require that all executive officials enumerated therein must obtain the consent of the President before appearing in legislative investigations. No consent, no show! The order covers senior officials of the executive department, generals and flag officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police officers and senior national security officers. Only the janitors are not included! The total effect was effectively the paralyzation of legislative investigations.

The Court's clear conclusion was that this portion of the executive order must be invalidated. The Court upheld the right of Congress to compel the appearance of executive officials in legislative investigations. The only person exempt from the compulsive power of Congress in legislative investigations is the President, the Court said.

It is hard to see this as a victory for government lawyers.

I must admit, however, that the government lawyers focused on the fact that the decision upheld the existence of "executive privilege." But even this claim is nuanced and must be carefully analyzed.

The first thing that must be made clear is that the only person who can claim executive privilege by reason of office is the President. She and she alone is co-equal with Congress. Other executive officials may claim executive privilege, but they cannot claim it by reason of the office they hold. It

must be by reason of the nature of the privilege they are claiming. And in their case, mere assertion of privilege does not establish the privilege. In the ultimate analysis, it is the Court which decides whether the subject is indeed covered by privilege.

It is thus necessary to understand the nature and scope of executive privilege as it has been recognized in jurisprudence. We are heirs to American jurisprudence on this subject, and we derive our understanding of the nature and concept of executive privilege from American jurisprudence.

In simplest term, as the Court has put it, executive privilege is the power of the executive to withhold certain types of information from the public, from the courts and from Congress. More precisely, however, it is not just one privilege but a variety of privileges. "One variety of the privilege," constitutional scholar Laurence Tribe explains, "is the state secrets privilege invoked by US Presidents, beginning with Washington, on the ground that the information is of such nature that its disclosure would subvert crucial military or diplomatic objectives. Another variety is the informer's privilege, or the privilege of the Government not to disclose the identity of persons who furnish information of violations of law to officers charged with the enforcement of that law. Finally, a generic privilege for internal deliberations has been said to attach to intra-governmental documents reflecting advisory opinions, recommendations and deliberations comprising part of a process by which governmental decisions and policies are formulated."

Very importantly, however, the Court also noted: "That a type of information recognized as privileged does not, however, necessarily mean that it would be considered privileged in all instances. For in determining the validity of a claim of privilege, the question that must be asked is not only whether the requested information falls within one of the traditional privileges, but also whether that privilege should be honored in a given procedural setting."

Thus, the fact that the Court has upheld the existence of executive privilege in jurisprudence does not mean that the Court has upheld the privileged nature of the claims so far made by the government. For instance, the decision did not mean that the information Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani was prevented from communicating was privileged in nature. What Gudani knows might just be information which the public has every right to know. This can be verified in a closed door hearing of the Court.

Hence, again, the claim of government victory in the tribunal's decision on EO 464 is premature, to say the least.

How about the fact that the Court upheld the validity of BP 880? Was that a meaningful government victory?

The significant point of the decision is not so much the fact that it upheld BP 880 which, after all, is largely a codification of earlier decisions on assembly and petition. What is more significant is that it upbraided the government for adopting a dangerously vague policy of "calibrated preemptive response" and blamed it for not having established freedom parks; ordered municipalities to establish freedom parks within a given period after which, if they failed to do so, all open parks would be considered freedom parks; and emphasized that if a requested permit was not granted within two days it should be considered as granted. That is hardly a government victory worth boasting about.

In conclusion, let me just say: It is difficult to awaken a person who is already awake.

Sharing

WHY IS MAY 1 SO SIGNIFICANT THAT THE PEOPLE OF every country—except the United States, Canada and South Africa—choose this day to commemorate International Workers' Day?

Most baby boomers would probably remember, from their history lessons back in high school, that in 1884 the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions in the United States

passed a resolution demanding an 8-hour workday effective May 1, 1886. When that day came and it became clear

that no favorable legislation was forthcoming from the US Congress, workers went on a general strike. The mass action was marred by the bloody Haymarket Riot in Chicago, Illinois.

But why does the United States celebrate Labor Day in September, when the May Day rallies began on American soil? Partly because the first ever Labor Day parade was held on Sept. 5, 1882, when 10,000 workers from various labor unions gathered at Union Square in New York City to ask for better working conditions. In 1894, President Grover Cleveland, fearing the growing militancy shown during May Day rallies, declared the first Monday of September as the official US Labor Day.

In the Philippines, the first Labor Day rally was held in 1903, when about 100,000 workers organized by the Union Obrero Democratica de Filipinas marched on Malacañang, also to demand better working conditions.

These bits of history, however, might not be part of the stock knowledge of many of today's high school students for many reasons—like the lack of accurately written history textbooks and supplemental reading materials.

Indeed, the Department of Education's Fact Sheet for Academic Year 2004-2005 shows that the Fourth Year High School Mean Percentage Score for Araling Panlipunan (Social Studies, which includes History) is 50.01 percent. This means that the average public school senior student gets about half of the test questions correctly. The national high school average achievement rate is 46.8 percent for all tests (i.e., Math, Science, English, Filipino and Araling Panlipunan).

But don't despair because help is on the way—from people who are willing to share what they have. Consider, for example, the Education Revolution activities of Capitol University in Cagayan de Oro City. The activities started in 2004 when its president, lawyer Casimiro Juarez Jr., signed a memorandum of agreement with the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWWPP) as an Education Revolution program partner in Cagayan de Oro City. Thus, Capitol University took on the job of drafting and implementing a comprehensive community development plan anchored on improving the quality of education for an entire barangay.

Anybody involved in social development work knows that community empowerment is not an activity to be taken lightly.

Fortunately, Capitol University has both the academic discipline and field experience to successfully address the community-specific issues that have cropped up during the past two years. Dr. Alice M. Diel, director of the university's Research and Extension Office, mobilized community extension officers from the different colleges to spearhead not just one but an entire set of programs for community empowerment and education improvement, collectively known as CARE SEED (Change Agent Research Extension Socio Economic and Environmental Development).

Diel recently visited the FWPP's offices here in Manila to tell us that through CARE SEED, the Education Revolution has begun to flourish in Cagayan de Oro City.

The pupils of St. John the Baptist Elementary School, Capitol University's adopted public school, have been undergoing remedial and tutorial classes in English, Science and Numeracy. At the same time, they were made beneficiaries of a school-feeding program. Concurrently, the parents have been offered the option to attend alternative non-formal schooling so they can reinforce their children's studies at home.

To promote positive civic values, CARE SEED conducts continuing seminars on basic health services for both children and parents. CARE SEED also runs several community development activities, such as livelihood and skills trainings, community organizing and leadership sessions, techniques for setting up of cooperatives, and seminars on crime and drug prevention. It even spearheads marine environment protection and conservation activities, given Cagayan de Oro's rich aquatic ecosystem.

Diel tells us that she and her group strive to be as sensitive as possible to the pulse of their adopted communities through focus group discussions. Diel says that parents and other community members are now active in these forums.

Capitol University—with people like Juarez and Diel, and their team of community extension officers—can do much for the communities that it routinely interacts with. But even a single individual can make a big difference.

Natasha Tabucal earned a college degree after several years of hard work. She has a world of options open to her. However, she has decided to enroll in the UP College of Education for a Certificate in Professional Education because she really wants to teach in a public school.

"I have long wanted to become a teacher but was not really encouraged before. [But] three years after graduating from college, I have decided that teaching is really what I want to do," Natasha wrote in an e-mail she sent to us recently. She added that when she told people about her plan and especially about the part where she wants to teach in a public school, not a few eyebrows were raised.

Natasha continues, "Honestly, this career change is a bit scary, but I know this is what my heart tells me to do."

We at the FWPP are happy to have played a part in Capitol University's Education Revolution for Cagayan de Oro City. We are elated that there are people like Juarez and Diel who share our vision that education is the best weapon against poverty. We are likewise deeply moved by Natasha's gesture. Whatever happens, she already has made a difference.

(You may send e-mail to the author at execdir@fwpp.org.)

Butch Hernandez is executive director of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power.

Public servant as a whistle-blower: reflections

COMMENTARY

Ruben M. Manatad

DECIDING TO BECOME A WHISTLE-BLOWER IS no easy matter. One has to grapple with one's conscience and with the dangers and uncertainties he or she must face for such a decision. That is why a number of whistle-blowers eventually succumbed to pressures, threats and material enticements thrown at them to "persuade" them to retract. Indeed, some whistle-blowers have been blown to kingdom come and silenced forever.

Public servants, as "insiders," can minimize (at least) the incidence of irregularities in government. It may be the spirit of altruism—the desire to make a difference in the lives of others—that impels some of them to become whistle-blowers and defy the dangers and the fears that come with their self-imposed calling. It is just so tragic that most of us choose to remain deaf and blind to the shenanigans in our midst, thus allowing graft and corruption to flourish right within the bureaucracy.

Corruption in government is reflective of the moral decadence in our society. But it is not only corruption in government that is keeping our nation stuck in the doghouse.

Our culture has also been corrupted. We seem to have lost the long-held Filipino values of *hiya*, *delicadesa*, *utang na loob* and *palabra de honor*. We have allowed our positive cultural traits to be smothered by insatiable greed. We now put on high pedestals people with wealth and power, no matter how they may have acquired them.

It is imperative for us to bring ourselves out of the doghouse and back to higher ground, and to recover our sense of integrity, righteousness, uprightness, decency, honesty, patriotism and nationalism, as well as our taste for simple liv-

ing and commitment to genuine public service. We should extol sincerity and thumb down dishonesty and opportunism. It would be good for us to inculcate in our hearts and minds these words of President Manuel L. Quezon: "Poverty with honor is preferable to wealth with dishonor."

Indeed, moral fortitude manifests itself in a simple and honest life. Og Mandino has this advice: "Learn to live with honest poverty, if you must, and turn to more important matters, than transporting gold to your grave." The Holy Book also teaches that "An honorable person acts honestly and stands firm for what is right." (Isaiah 32:8)

While promoting a culture of integrity in the public service, we must develop a culture of excellence in the work place. We must seek to rise above our weaknesses—institutional or personal—and vigorously aim for greatness. The primary consideration should be love of country, honest and efficient service to the people, not loyalty or gratitude to the appointing authority.

This means putting up systems that encourage teamwork, creativity and critical thinking; professionalism, merit system, leadership and accountability; dynamic, progressive and inspiring leadership; free expression and active participation in the processes of decision-making. People in government need to be empowered, too.

At the same time, it is vital for the citizens of a

democratic country to assume a greater role in changing or reforming society. And any change should reflect the sovereign will.

The sovereign will may be expressed not only during elections but also in charting policies for better governance, greater transparency and greater accountability. This only underscores the fact that it is a people's inherent right to decide their own fate. Our experience has shown us that surrendering this right to our elected leaders has been a debacle, as politicians would rather protect their own interests first and foremost even before they represent the people's.

For us in the bureaucracy, this dark hour of our country's existence is a defining moment. Shall we stand firm by our sacred oath to genuinely serve our people under the doctrine that public office is a public trust? Can we muster the courage to denounce corruption?

Or would we rather submit to a sense of powerlessness and remain indifferent, and thus turn our backs on our obligation to bequeath to our children and the future generations of Filipinos a better Philippines and a brighter future?

To remain numb to our people's anguish in the midst of corruption is to conspire with the evil forces that are eating up our national body and soul. This is an act of betrayal—a betrayal of our people. And therefore, unforgivable.

Edmund Burke said: "All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

Ruben M. Manatad is the resident ombudsman of the National Food Authority in Region 8. He is one of those who exposed the switching of smuggled rice (confiscated in June 2002 by the Bureau of Customs in Hindang, Leyte) with sawdust.

Why revolts fail

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III



JOSE RIZAL, IN HIS ESSAY, "THE PHILIPPINES A Century Hence," observed that, "All the petty insurrections that have occurred in the Philippines were the work of a few fanatics or discontented soldiers, who had to deceive and humbug the people or avail themselves of their powers over their subordinates to gain their ends. So they all failed. No insurrection had a popular character, or was based on a need of the whole race, or was fought for human rights or justice; so it left no ineffaceable impressions ... when they saw that they had been duped, the people bound up their wounds and applauded the overthrow of the disturbers of their peace! But what if the movement springs from the people themselves and based its causes upon their woes?"

He was referring, of course, to all the previous revolts; he was pointing, in a sense, to the possibility—which became fact a few years after he wrote his essay—of a revolution for national, and not local, liberation. And yet the Philippine revolution, which Rizal branded as premature, failed, too.

Apolinario Mabini, summing up the fall of the First Republic, wrote, "To sum it up, the Revolution failed because it was badly led; because its leader won his post by reprehensible rather than meritorious acts; because instead of supporting the men most useful to the people, he made them useless out of jealousy. Identifying the aggrandizement of the people with his own, he judged the worth of men not by their ability, character and patriotism, but rather by their degree of friendship and kinship with him; and anxious to secure the readiness of his favorites to sacrifice themselves for him, he was tolerant even of their transgressions. Because he thus neglected the people, they forsaken him; and forsaken by the people, he was bound to fall like a waxen idol melting in the heat of adversity."

Within the living memory of Filipinos today, there have been many notable rebellions, and on the whole, they have all failed. The Sakdalistas of the 1930s became the Makapilis of the 1940s, despised and hated by their countrymen; the Huk-

balahap movement, virtually knocking at the gates of Manila at one point, degenerated into banditry and brigandage; the New People's Army, proclaiming the historical certainty of victory since 1969, waits still for history to catch up with its propaganda—even as the country reacts to attempts to liquidate its leadership with scandalous indifference. Gregorio Honasan is once more in hiding, and over him and his methods continues to hover the shadow of a country that won't forgive his troops for killing bystanders in 1987.

The fact remains, however, that the Sakdalistas, the Huks, the RAM, all failed; the NPA is nowhere near even the end of the beginning of its revolution. Of course, their enemy—the Philippine government and whoever they believe either assists it or props it up—has more arms, more soldiers and officers, more resources and foreign assistance; but these things are not enough to explain why, despite its many defects, the government is still here and its enemies are not. Rizal's and Mabini's indictments remain as relevant today as they were when they were written.

In 1985, F. Sionil Jose gathered four Huk veteran leaders—Casto Alejandrino, Jesus B. Lava, Fred Saulo and Luis Taruc—for a reunion of sorts, to discuss why the Huk rebellion failed. Alejandrino gave his reasons: class antagonism "between the manual workers and the non-manual workers," particularly the workers' resentment against intellectuals. Out of this perpetual tension emerged another problem: the movement "wasn't able to create, develop, a leader who is good in fighting and at the same time is an intellectual."

Jesus Lava, on the other hand, put forward

four categories of errors he thought the movement committed. First, he felt the Maoist strategy of surrounding the cities from the countryside was wrong. Second, seeing the United States had accepted communist rule in China made the Huks think the Americans could live with a communist victory in the Philippines. Third, the Huks suffered from a military deficiency: "We had no theoretical training in warfare techniques." Then, they were unable to replenish their losses in the field (in large part, because people were frightened by the government). Even "if the people were emotionally and psychologically predisposed, and intellectually convinced of the nobility and justice of our cause, they would rather stay out than become involved in the struggle."

Saulo's explanation was simpler. "We didn't know when to advance and when to retreat," he said, and admitted to a personal failure of nerve: "I had in mind the change of tactics from military struggle to parliamentary struggle, but I did not have the courage to present this to the authorities in the movement because I might be liquidated." He felt the Huks had an opportunity to make this change when President Quirino was fighting for his political life against Ramon Magsaysay. Taruc, for his part, said Saulo's fear of being killed, had he expressed criticism, showed one big cause for the Huks' failure: Dissent could earn you a bullet. Add to this a fetish for dogmatic purity which hurt many potential allies, including peasants. He said he opposed the proposition that "Those who are not with us are against us," and preferred the one that stated: "Those who are not against us are with us."

And yet, the overwhelming number of our people stubbornly insist on political solutions to economic and social problems: the ballot remains the magic bullet. For its adherence to this view, the public is portrayed as either selfish, or silly, or even suicidal. But what if the people are right? And those insisting on the other solutions are wrong? As Rizal asked, what then?

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph/blog

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Where are advocates of oil deregulation?

NOWADAYS, ALmost everybody agrees that Republic Act 8479 or the Oil Deregulation Act of 1998 must be reviewed in the face of the non-stop escalation of oil prices and the scandalous profits of major oil companies in the country.

The review should be immediately done if only to calm down the growing restiveness among our people who have to contend with new and/or higher taxes,

rising cost of living and an inept government.

But we dare ask again, where are the advocates of the oil deregulation law? Where are the lawmakers, present and past, who supported the passage of that law? Where are those who quickly refilled the oil deregulation bill when the Supreme Court nullified RA 8180 or the Oil Deregulation Act of 1996? They should be facing the public today and defend their centerpiece legislation.

Where is President Ramos who certified the bill as priority administration measure? Where are the economists who painted gloom-and-doom scenarios in the event Congress failed to pass the oil deregulation measure? Didn't they promise a better economy and open competition that will drive the oil prices down? What have we

got now? We spent millions, possibly billions, of taxpayers' money in committee meetings, public hearings, technical working groups and bicameral conferences in order to pass a law that is now proving to be disastrous to the economy and to the lives of our poor.

We challenge the adherents of oil deregulation who were amazingly optimistic about their economic projections to awaken from their slumber and come out of their holes and do a repeat performance—show an objective and scientific presentation of how or why oil deregulation would benefit the public.

—RAYMOND PALATINO,
president,
Kabataan
Sectoral Party,
mongpalatino@gmail.com

Quotes and misquotes on phone project

THIS IS IN RESPONSE TO THE NEWS ITEM headlined "Phones in \$20M village project don't have dial tones," written by Julie S. Alipala. (PDI, 4/9/06)

I would like to make the following corrections:

1. Quoting me, she reported "that about 1,000 phone lines under the TSB project are not working in the peninsula." What I actually said was that there are about 1,000 TSB phone lines in Zamboanga, but I never said that none of them was working.

2. She also reported that I said, "Because of mismanagement, Congress decided to discontinue the project." To be precise, what I actually told her was that Congress decided not to fund the project any further. It was the Department of Transportation and Communications that decided to discontinue the project because of lack of funds.

3. Finally, she quoted me as saying that my agency "was pursuing the TSB project using the Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) technology." What I really said was that the TSB project has been discontinued. The VOIP project is an altogether separate project, not an expansion of the TSB project. As such, the VOIP project has nothing to do with the TSB project.

In addition, Alipala reported that I am the "assistant secretary for telecommunications." This gave the impression that I'm from the DOTC. The fact is, I have never worked at the DOTC in my whole life. I am an ex-officio commissioner of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology and the assistant secretary of the Telecommunications Office. I have held this position since Dec. 9, 2005, long after the events surrounding the implementation of the TSB project had transpired. I do not have any first-hand information about the implementation of the TSB project, having heard about it from other sources only.

I am certain that the errors in Alipala's article are not intentional. Nevertheless, I hope for the timely publication of this letter to correct and clarify the inaccurate reports.

—FRANCISCO S. PEREZ II,
assistant secretary,
Telecommunications Office
and ex-officio commissioner,
Commission on Information
and Communications Technology,
A. Rocas Avenue, Quezon City

According to my record of our conversation, Perez said that almost all of the 1,000 TSB lines in the Zamboanga peninsula do not work; that because of mismanagement, "Congress decided that it should discontinue the project"; that "TSB will use VOIP capability which is more cost effective especially if you use long distance calls." (He did not say the two are separate projects.) The story made no mention that he is with the DOTC.

—JULIE S. ALIPALA,
correspondent, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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APPEAL TO GMA: STOP KILLINGS

Kin of slain activists to join protests



BARBECUE FESTIVAL RAY B. ZAMBRANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
Residents and visitors grill pork and milkfish among others during the Beggang ti Rang-ay Barbecue Festival, part of the fiesta celebration in Alcala, Pangasinan.

LUCENA CITY—WITH THE RENEWED WAVE OF killings of activists, families of the victims will also join the protest march on Mendiola today to ask President Macapagal-Arroyo to order a stop to the series of murders of progressive leaders and members across the country, a top official of the party-list group Bayan Muna announced yesterday.

Robert de Castro, Bayan Muna national deputy secretary general, said relatives of their slain members from Southern Tagalog and Eastern Visayas would march alongside with other protesters.

He said local chapters in Quezon and Bicol had also been getting in touch with families of the latest victims to be able to join them in a collective condemnation of the killings.

The families believe that the killings were perpetrated by soldiers, but military authorities have strongly denied the charge.

A Bayan Muna activist in Quezon and five others were killed in different areas in Bicol since last week.

Figures from Karapatan, a militant human rights organization, show that at least 564 political killings had been recorded since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office in 2001.

De Castro said Bayan Muna had lost 90 members since the start of the Arroyo administration.

"We challenge Ms Arroyo to stop political hypocrisy by order-

ing the AFP to withdraw OBL (Oplan Bantay Laya) and dismantle all military death squads now sowing terror in all corners of the country," De Castro said.

He added that all political killings were products of a vicious conspiracy that purportedly involved Malacañang and the military.

De Castro also asked the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines to "uphold life in its fullest."

"Condemning political killings is a prophetic stand," he said in his appeal to one of the most influential voices in this predominantly Catholic country.

Bayan Muna challenged Congress and the Senate to conclude and make a stand on various human rights investigations conducted by their committees.

"They should specifically compel the AFP to produce the J2 memorandum of Gen. Tirso Danga

dated Sept. 4 and 24," he said.

De Castro described the purported memorandum as "essentially a death warrant for the leaders of legal progressive organizations wrongly accused as CPP front."

"The memo betrays Arroyo and her cabal of military generals as the brains behind the web of MIG (Military Intelligence Group) agents who killed 564 activists," he said.

De Castro said the wave of killings was in compliance with OBL, a purported military campaign to destroy the New People's Army and other leftist groups within five years with 2006 as the final year.

Armed Forces spokesperson Maj. Gen. Jose Angel Honrado has confirmed the existence of the OBL but stressed that it had nothing to do with legal leftist organizations. *Delfin T. Mullari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Police file murder charges vs wounded labor leader

CALAMBA CITY—CAVITE POLICE on Saturday said charges of frustrated and attempted murder had been filed against a labor leader who engaged a group of police intelligence agents in a shootout in Imus, Cavite on Friday even as militants sought for an impartial investigation of the incident.

Imus police chief Supt. Efrén Castro said they filed one count of frustrated murder and two counts of attempted murder against Gerardo Cristobal, 34, of Barangay Malagasang, Imus.

He said the charges had been filed at the provincial prosecutor's office in Imus a few hours after the labor leader allegedly ambushed SPO1 Romeo Lara and two others along the coastal road in Barangay Anabu.

Castro said Cristobal had been placed under arrest and policemen had been guarding him at the Our Lady of Pillar Hospital, also in Imus.

Both Cristobal and Lara were in stable condition after undergoing several operations, Castro said.

He defended Lara, the chief of the intelligence division of his office, saying his men were on their way to an anti-illegal drugs operation when the shooting happened.

"I don't know what really happened there, but the operation was in our blotter," Castro said over the phone.

Militant groups in Cavite pressed for a speedy and impartial investigation of the shooting incident as they accused the police of trying to conceal the

wrongdoing of one of their members.

Sheryl Villegas, secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) in Cavite, said the statements made by Supt. Rodel Sermonia, intelligence chief of the Cavite police, were irresponsible and immature.

She said Sermonia's pronouncement in a radio interview that it was Cristobal who tried to kill Lara was an attempt to hide the truth. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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Across the NATION

Negros Or. to get P90-M grant if it improves tax collection

By Romy Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—NEGROS ORIENTAL will receive around P90 million in grant from the European Union (EU) for a health program but under one condition: Improve tax collection efficiency to sustain the undertaking.

Provincial treasurer Danilo Mendez said the EU would extend grants to 15 other provinces in the country that have given priority to health services by setting aside a bigger budget and institutionalized innovative and effective health programs.

Negros Oriental has been implementing the so-called inter-local health zone, where contiguous lo-

cal government units are clustered and their resources are pooled to improve the delivery of health services.

Mendez said the grant would be used to purchase medicines, among other items.

But "the EU would like to have the program continued even if its financial support was already terminated. That is why, it wants the recipient provinces to improve its tax collection efficiency as one of the conditions to receive the grant," he said.

Mendez said Negros Oriental must collect at least 50 percent of its delinquent real property taxes as its commitment to the EU.

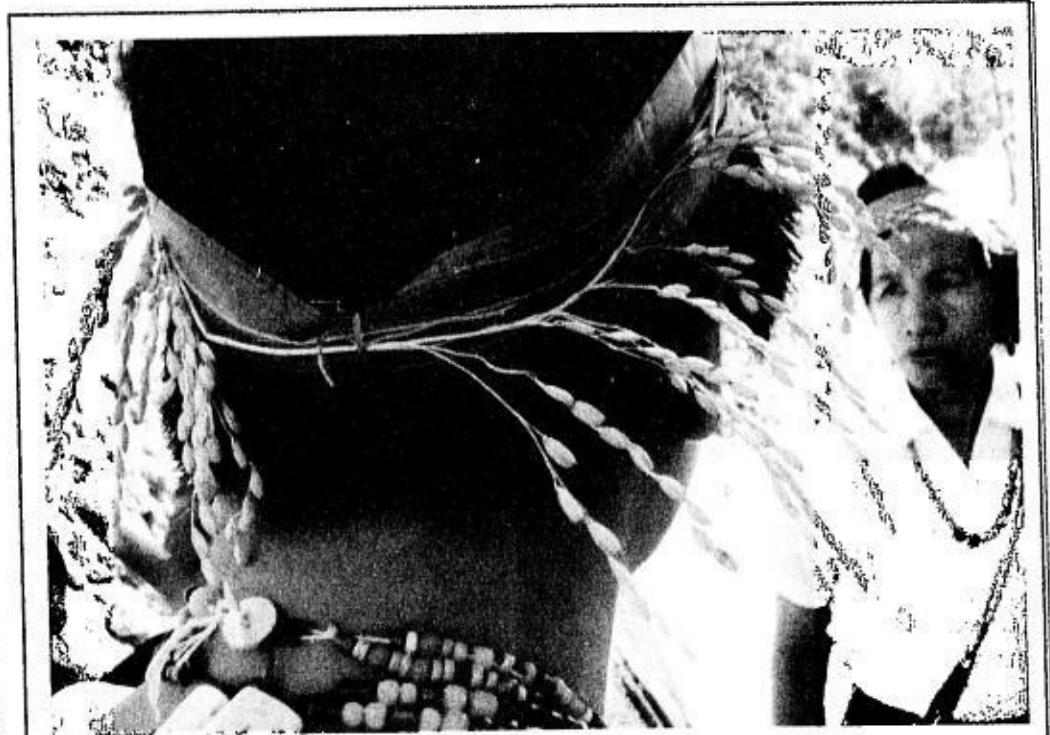
"This year, we have to collect at least P50 million of the P100 million

in delinquent real property taxes in order for us to avail ourselves of the grant," Mendez said.

He admitted that it would be difficult to achieve this collection goal, but "if everybody shall cooperate, especially our municipal treasurers and public officials, there is no doubt that the amount can be collected."

This is one of the reasons the provincial government has decided that pieces of real property with unpaid real estate taxes be publicly auctioned, Mendez said.

Hopefully, the collection would have improved by the third quarter of this year when the EU would start releasing the amount directly to recipient provinces on a staggered basis, Mendez said.



INDIGENOUS ACCESSORIES

The Kalinga women use unhusked rice as accessories in their headdress and skirts during the recent Unoy Festival in Tinglayan, Kalinga.

ROUNDUP

Palaro lacks funds

LEGAZPI CITY—This year's Palarong Pam-bansa, which is set for May 7-13 and hosted by Bicol, is facing funding problems. One of its organizers, Amaparo de Mata, chief of the Department of Education's Elementary Division here, said in a radio interview on Wednesday that the allotted P54 million, which would be divided among the different delegations, was not enough to meet their needs. The Bicol delegation was given only P1.5 million, almost the same amount given to a provincial delegation in the Palarong Bicol.

Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Boy dies in collision

LUCENA CITY—An 11-year-old boy died and at least seven others were seriously injured after two jeepneys collided along the national highway in Pitogo, Quezon on Friday. Police identified the fatality as Arjay Regencia, of Barangay Pidac, General Luna. Michael Regencia, a relative of the victim, was driving a jeep along the highway in Barangay Gan-gahin in Pitogo toward Macalelon at around 11:15 a.m., overtook another vehicle and collided with an approaching jeep. All passengers of the two jeepneys suffered serious injuries in different parts of the body and were rushed to the hospital. Arjay was declared dead on arrival.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NPA rebel shot dead

LUCENA CITY—A suspected New People's Army rebel was killed after he reportedly grabbed the gun of one of his captors in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro on Friday. Maj. Jose Brosa, spokesperson of the Army's Southern Luzon Command, said Randy Soriano, alias Ka Rodolfo, Jun and Pablo, an alleged member of the NPA Lucio de Guzman Command in Mindoro, was being brought to the Army headquarters when he grabbed his captor's .45 cal. pistol and jumped out of the vehicle. An Army soldier near the area fired at the victim and hit him in different parts of the body. Soriano died on the spot.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

6 dead in Bataan accident

BALANGA CITY—Six people, three of them children, were killed on Thursday when a 10-wheel delivery truck hit them and later burst into flames in Limay town, 30 km from here. Police said the driver, identified as Mario Inzon, lost control of the steering wheel when it hit a rock along the Roman Expressway in Barangay Alangan at about 8:45 a.m. The truck then hit Maritess Ingo, 24, her daughters Queenie, 2, and Alquin, 1, and niece, Baby Grace, who were walking on the shoulder. Police said Inzon and his daughter were killed when the truck slammed a house and caught fire.

Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk

3 suspected robbers slain

CABANATUAN CITY—Three suspected highway robbers were killed in a shootout with policemen in Sta. Rosa, Nueva Ecija, on Thursday. Supt. Ferdinand Vero, chief of the provincial Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit, said the suspects took at gunpoint a 10-wheel truck loaded with P800,000 worth of rice at a gasoline station here at about 2:20 a.m. Thursday. He said the truck owner, Albert Castelo, 49, a rice trader from Rizal, Nueva Ecija, told police that the robbers took his truck while he was resting at the gasoline station. Castelo said the robbers brought him to a van and dumped him on a road several kilometers from the station. About an hour later, Vero said, the truck was spotted along the Nueva Ecija-Tarlac Road in Sta. Rosa, 12 km south of this city. Reports said the robbers ignored signals for them to slow down and fired at the policemen, prompting the latter to fire back. The suspects—Honorio Henobes, George Ardiles and another man—died inside the truck that they hijacked.

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Fertilizer from trash

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Environment and Natural Resources Office here is now producing organic fertilizer from the biodegradable garbage it collects. City environment officer Rogelio Clamonte said his office was producing 60 bags of organic fertilizer in 45 days, which it sold for P50 per bag or P2.50 per 300 grams. He said the process involved feeding earthworms with biodegradable waste. Earthworm manure becomes the organic fertilizer. Mostly city employees buy the fertilizer, he said.

Romy G. Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

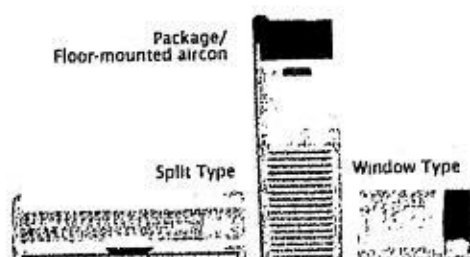
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GMA: Gov't to flush out terrorists from their lairs

BACOLOD CITY—"THE THREAT does not sleep."

This was stressed here by President Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday as she called on local government officials to remain vigilant against terrorist activities.

The President said the continued threat was clearly shown when the Philippine National Police seized a cache of explosives reportedly intended to disrupt today's Labor Day demonstrations in a suspected Abu Sayyaf hideout in Marikina City on Thursday.

"I congratulate the PNP for averting yet another terror plot, which shows our steadfast vigilance against terrorists," she told a national conference of the Vice Mayors' League of the Philippines.

She said the government would not allow terrorists to creep into the metropolis and vowed that, together with local government officials, it would flush out terrorists from their lairs in urban areas and far-flung jungles.

"We must be constantly on alert... Let us never be cowed by the disciples of anarchy as we uphold constitutional order and the rule of law at all cost," she said.

Ms Arroyo turned over P2.1 million to Veronica Mondejar, a representative of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade Foundation, for the group's livelihood fund.

The donation was part of her administration's commitment to the peace process with the RPA-ABB, she said. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Across the NATION

5 farmers missing in S. Tagalog

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—TWO CAVITE peasant activists and three Batangas farmers have been declared missing since Friday and were believed to have been abducted by the military, according to an official of the militant human rights group Karapatan.

Doris Cuario, secretary general of Karapatan-Southern Tagalog, identified the missing farmer leaders as Riel Custodio and Axel Pinpin, both of the Kalipunan ng Samahan ng mga Magsasaka ng Cavite.

The two were reported seen with Aristides Sarmiento, Rico Ibañez and a certain Michael, all farmers from Tanauan City, near the boundary of Tagaytay City, Cuario said.

Maj. Jose Broso, spokesperson of the military's Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Nakar here, denied that the military was responsible for the disappearance of the five farmers.

He said his office had not received any report about the incident.

Caravan

"The past week, Riel and Axel

were inviting farmers to join the Labor Day protest caravan. The last time that they made contact was on Friday. They said they were with the three farmers," Cuario said.

The Karapatan leader suspected that military elements were behind the disappearance of the five.

Abduction

"The military has been conducting disinformation campaign to sabotage the protest mobilization. They now resort to abduction to instill fear and prevent more farmers from join-

ing the protest actions," Cuario said.

"Karapatan should just exert more effort to locate their missing members and not quickly point their accusing fingers at the military," Broso said. "Their perpetual accusation has now become a comical circus."

Efforts to locate the missing persons in different police stations and military camps proved futile, Cuario said.

At least seven other farmers from Batangas province have "mysteriously disappeared" since January, according to Cuario.

Task force to speed up probe of farmer's killing

DAVAO CITY—POLICE IN DAVAO del Norte have created the Task Force Cabanit to speed up investigation and arrest of suspects in the April 24 killing of peasant leader Enrico Cabanit in Panabo City.

Cabanit, 54, secretary general of the Pambansang Ugnayan ng mga Nagsasariling Lokal na Organisasyon sa Kanayunan (Unorka), was shot and killed by two men at the Panabo public market at around 6 p.m.

His daughter, Daffodil, who was also hit during the attack.

Cabanit "struggled for the full implementation of the comprehensive agrarian reform program and up until his death, he was hoping, although there was a little frustration, that the poor will be given land," said Rosaura Tapal, Unorka chair in Mindanao.

Provincial police chief Senior Supt. Jaime Morente said Cabanit's death could be related to land is-

sues. The motive and identities of the suspects were still being determined, he said.

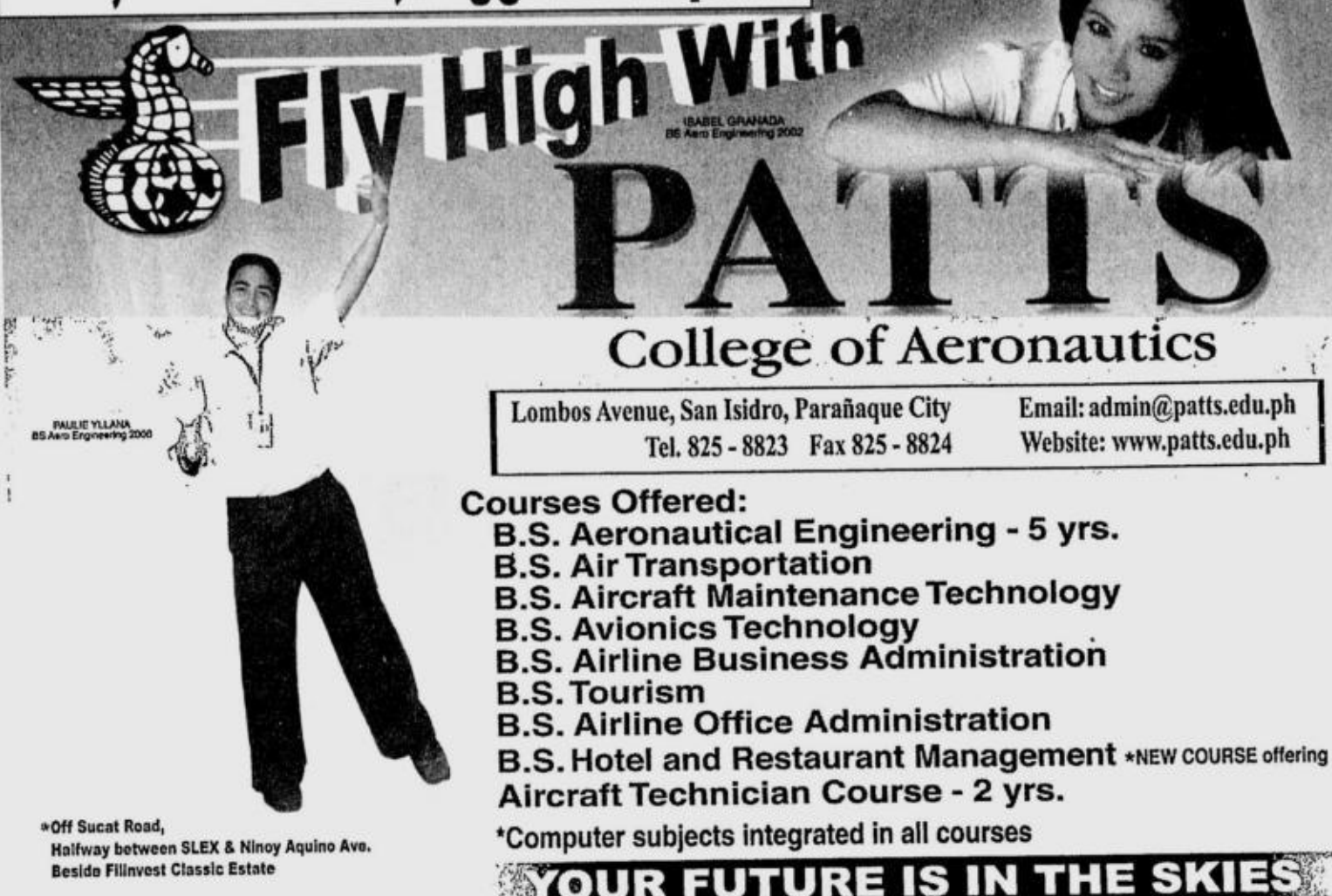
Cabanit was among the re-trenched workers of Tagum Development Corp., a banana company owned by the family of Davao del Norte Rep. Antonio Florendo. He had been pushing for the distribution of the land occupied by the company.

Richard Uajan, lawyer for the Floirendos, said his clients could not understand why they were being implicated in Cabanit's death.

"The Floirendos did not have a quarrel with the victim. We are saddened by this incident and we welcome any investigation about this," Uajan said.

Cabanit, the fourth peasant leader killed this month, will be buried today. *Jeffrey M. Tupas and Dennis Jay C. Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Across the NATION

Sierra Madre natives in Quezon flee homes

LUCENA CITY—AN UNDETERMINED number of mountain villagers, including Agta natives, living in the slopes of Sierra Madre in General Nakar, Quezon have left their homes since April 23 for fear of being caught in the crossfire between government forces and communist New People's Army rebels.

General Nakar Mayor Leovigildo Rozul said the mass evacuation started after the killing by unidentified men of Bayan Muna

member Marilou Rubio and her brother on April 22 in Barangay Magsikap.

"Agta natives and Tagalog settlers from the mountain have sought shelter in their relatives' houses in the poblacion. They are afraid of getting caught in the middle once patrolling Army soldiers engage NPA rebels," Rozul said in a phone interview.

The mayor said soldiers had been conducting frequent combat patrols in search of guerrillas.

He quoted Magsikap's barangay chief as saying that almost half of the residents had sought refuge in town.

Fr. Pete Montallana, coordinator of the Indigenous Peoples' Apostolate in the Prelature of Infanta and director of the Tribal Center for Development (TCD), said the Agta had moved to the TCD building in Infanta town.

He identified the deserted Agta settlements as Sitio Anibongan in Barangay Magsikap, Sitio Tamala

in Barangay San Marcelino, and Sitio Malatunglan in Barangay Sablang.

"I was told that the natives from Sitio Malatunglan now stay on the seashore," the priest said.

Lusing Kapatagan, Agta chieftain in Anibongan, said he had received information that he was included in the military's order of battle as suspected NPA civilian ally.

"That's why I immediately left home and my farm, and stayed in Infanta. I'm not afraid of my safety but of my people," he said in a phone interview.

Southern Luzon Command spokesperson Maj. Jose Brosio blamed the rebels for the exodus.

"They have been spreading deceiving and malicious information that the military was behind the murders (of a leftist activist and her brother) when in fact, the killings were perpetrated by their own killer squad," he said.

Montallana said the natives were concerned not only with their

safety but also with their farms.

"This is harvesting and planting season for the natives. They have to stay in their farms or else face the prospect of one whole year of uncertainty and deprivation," he said.

The priest has called on government and rebel forces to respect the "peace zones" that they declared in 2004, which encompass the Real-Infanta-General Nakar area. **Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**

29 geologists doing geohazard mapping in Leyte, Biliran

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—A TEAM OF 29 GEOLOGISTS from the Mines and Geosciences Bureau has been deployed to conduct a geohazard survey of critical barangays in Leyte and Biliran.

The move came after an assessment in Southern Leyte showed that 94 percent of the villages in the province were disaster-prone.

Adriano Fuego, regional director of the Office of Civil Defense, on Friday told the INQUIRER that a recent MGB rapid geohazard assessment survey in Southern Leyte revealed that 104 barangays in that province had a high incidence of landslide susceptibility.

He said 142 others had moderate landslide susceptibility and 208, low landslide susceptibility.

Few safe villages

Only 15 barangays were found safe from landslides, Fuego said, citing a report of the MGB central office dated April 9, 2006, that was submitted to the National Disaster Coordinating Council.

The report disclosed that 468 of the 497 barangays in Southern Leyte were susceptible not only to landslides but also to floods.

Villages found to be highly susceptible to landslides were those in Maasin City and the towns of San Francisco, Liloan, San Ricardo, St. Bernard and Sogod.

Southern Leyte has been repeatedly hit by killer landslides, which have claimed hundreds of lives. Badly hit on Feb. 12 were Barangay Agas-agas in Sogod town, where seven persons were buried alive, and Barangay Guinsaugon in St. Bernard on Feb. 17, where more than a thousand people were killed when a mudslide covered the whole village with mud and big boulders.

In December 2003, some 150 people died in landslides that hit San Ricardo and San Francisco towns, also in Southern Leyte.

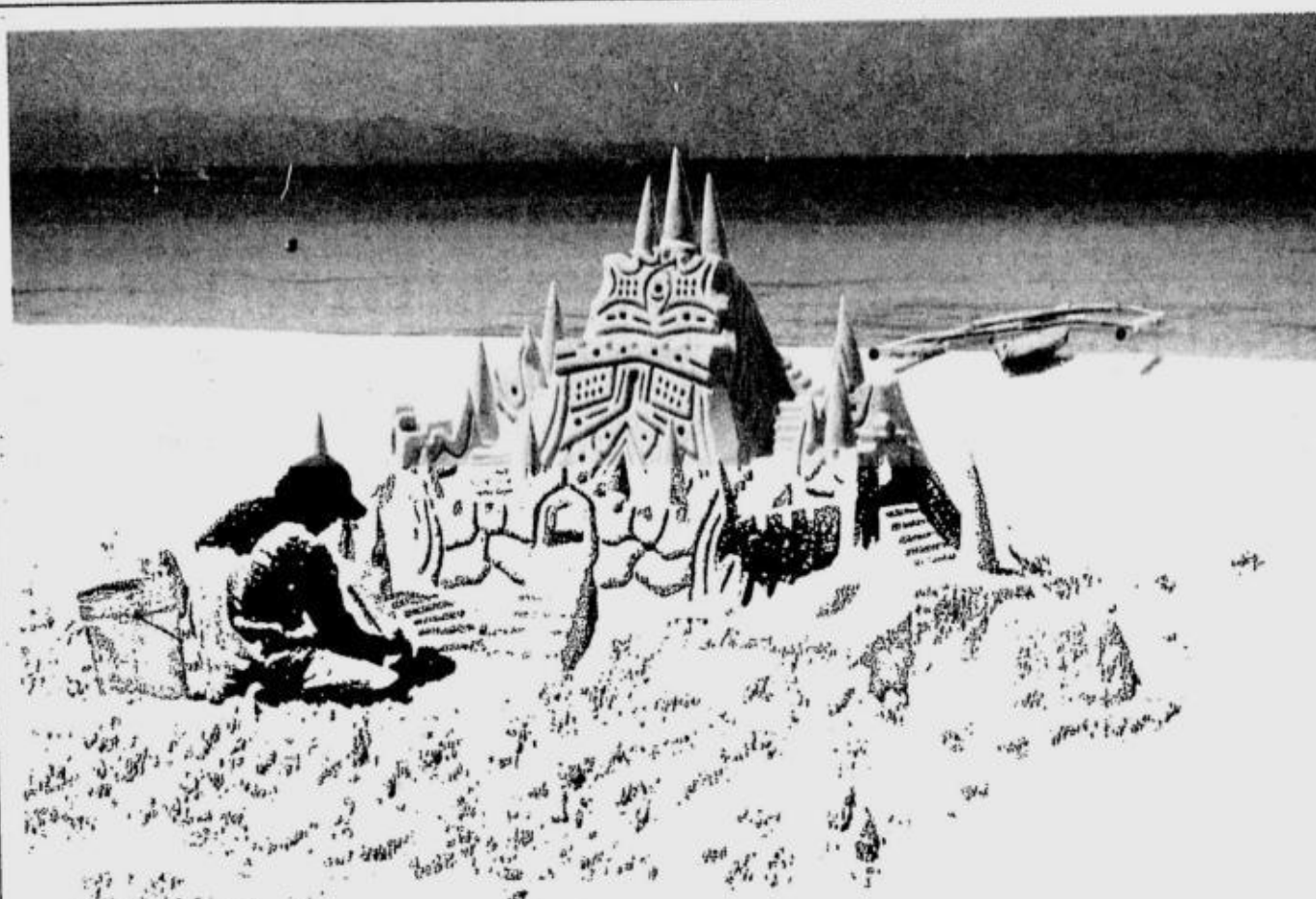
Technical team

The MGB team now conducting a rapid geological assessment in Leyte and Biliran is composed of technical personnel from the agency's central and regional offices in the Ilocos, Central Luzon, Metro Manila, Central Visayas, Northern Mindanao and Eastern Visayas.

MGB-Eastern Visayas Director Loreto B. Alburo is the overall project coordinator, while Salvio Lasema, a supervising science research specialist from the central office, is the field coordinator, MGB-8 information officer Delia Abasolo said in a press release.

The geohazard survey in the two provinces started on April 18 and will end on May 15, she said.

She said that a village noted to have high landslide risks would be presented a Landslide Threat Advisory, to inform the barangay of its susceptibility to landslides or floods. Recommendations on what actions to take in case of emergency would also be given to the village, she added.



SAND CASTLES IN BORACAY

This man puts the finishing touches on a sand castle he built on the beach of Boracay. Groups or individuals who construct such castles collect contributions from people who take souvenir photos of their creations and earn about P200 a day.

YVETTE LEE/CONTRIBUTOR

MGB wants quarrying stopped at Luisita

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE MINES AND Geosciences Bureau in Central Luzon has recommended a stop to quarrying activities at the Hacienda Luisita due to some violations and as the government prepares land distribution at the sugar estate.

Regional Director Angel Bravo signed the recommendation on April 24, MGB mines division regional chief Reynaldo Cruz said on Wednesday during a dialogue with government officials and leaders of the United Luisita Workers Union (Ulwu) here.

Sand extracted from some areas inside the hacienda are being used in the Japanese-funded Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway Project (SCTEP).

Cruz said the order would cover Rio Grande Builders and Aggregates Corp. and all other quarry operators within the 5,938-hectare estate owned by the Co-

juangco family in Tarlac.

The order, he said, would be addressed to Hazama Corp., a member of the joint venture building the Clark-Tarlac portion of the SCTEP.

Hazama and Hacienda Luisita Inc. have entered into a memorandum of agreement allowing the former to quarry sand within the estate for a year until November 2006. It was based on that document that the Tarlac provincial government issued Rio Grande a three-month special permit.

Rio Grande is the only company that got such permit, indicating that other quarry firms at the estate have been operating illegally.

DENR agencies have joined in settling the row as Ulwu leaders, in an April 11 dialogue with the Department of Agrarian Reform, sought an end to quarrying activities.

"These [activities] are destroying the lands that are covered for distribution to

farm workers," Ulwu president Rene Galang said.

According to the union, the quarry activities cover 14 hectares in Asturias, 17 ha in Bantug, seven ha in Cutcut, all on the Tarlac City side of the estate; 40 ha in Mabilog, 20 ha in Pasajes, and five ha in Parang, all on the Concepcion side.

Citing last week's investigation by the MGB, Cruz said the company took sand outside of the five-hectare area covered by its permit in Asturias. It did not have an environmental clearance certificate from the EMB, he said.

The probe confirmed the illegal quarrying in Bantug and other parts of Asturias.

In an April 24 memorandum, the environment and natural resources office of the provincial government said "indiscriminate quarrying" by Rio Grande was found in Asturias and Bantug.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

American firm to plant coconut oil substitute

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

VALENCIA, NEGROS ORIENTAL—AN American company looking for a substitute for coconut oil is planting 18,000 hectares of land in southern Negros Oriental to Jetropa, commonly known as "tuba-tuba."

This poisonous weed, which thrives on rocky and hard soil, is believed to lead the country in its quest for cheaper fuel alternatives in view of the escalating prices of crude oil.

Paul A. Aquino, president of the Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Develop-

ment Corp. (PNOC-EDC), said the American company would be planting the Jetropa inside the 133,000-ha Southern Negros Geothermal Project Reservation, which is government land, in the next few months.

He declined to name the American firm.

Three kilos of Jetropa would yield one liter of oil, an ideal substitute to coconut oil.

Coconut oil has been ruled out as a viable alternative because the price of coconut oil, which is vital in the production of biodiesel, has gone up.

"What's good about this crop is that it is poisonous and therefore not fit for human consumption. And this is native to Negros Oriental, along with 38 other varieties," Aquino said.

"We need to plant five million hectares of Jetropa if we have to substitute all diesel consumption in the country," Aquino said. A 10-percent substitution would require only 500,000 ha of land.

To be viable, it must be grown only in public land.

"You cannot plant Jetropa in private land where you have to pay lease that would be a losing venture," Aquino said.

Negros Occ. opens door to small town lottery

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—NEGROS OCCIDENTAL is the first local government in the Visayas that wants to embrace the operation of the Small Town Lottery (STL) in its locality.

Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) Visayas-Mindanao manager William Medici said the provincial board had passed a resolution asking the agency to operate the STL in the province.

Medici said the resolution had been forwarded to the PCSO central office and its board of directors had already approved the STL operation in the province.

"There is no definite date yet as to when the operation will start, but the PCSO board has already approved it," Medici said.

Capital

Medici said it might take some time for the STL to operate in a province or city because those applying to operate the lottery would be required by PCSO to put up a paid-up capital of P20 million.

The operators would need to hire personnel who would serve as "ushers" or bet collectors for the whole province or city, Medici said.

The results of the game will differ from every locality because the draw is localized, he said.

Medici stressed that the PCSO would only operate the STL in a province or city after its provincial board or city council had passed a resolution inviting the agency to operate the project in their place.

No force

Medici assured the public that the PCSO would not force the STL project in areas where local officials are opposed to it.

In Cebu City, for example, local officials, including Mayor Tomas Osmeña, have strongly objected to the entry of the STL.

But Medici said local governments should realize that the goal of operating the STL in provinces and cities "is still to do what is good for the people."

The LGUs, he said, would be getting their share from operations in their areas.

Medici said the Philippine National Police would also have its own share from the STL proceeds to be used for its social projects.

Fair media treatment on 'terrorism' urged

COTABATO CITY—MUSLIMS DO NOT really need time slots for religious affairs to assert "fair" media treatment, according to local critics of intolerance and discrimination.

Mayor Saudi Ampatuan Jr. of Datu Saudi Ampatuan town in Maguindanao said Muslims should instead assert objectivity of presentation, not only by the media, but also by news sources, particularly on the issue of terrorism.

Ampatuan instead cautioned news sources against a "double-standard" application of the word "terrorism."

He cited the powerful explosion on a roadside that killed his father, then the mayor of Datu Piang, Maguindanao, and 15 others on Dec. 24, 2002.

He said the nature and impact of the attack, being that of terrorism, was not emphasized in the news report, as compared to those on similar incidents that occurred in big cities. Instead, he said, a motive—politics—was quickly established.

Ampatuan said bombings which victimize Muslims were reported on the basis of a roughly drawn theory

on motives rather than on the nature of the attack, "although, the media may not be entirely at fault here."

City Councilor Anwar Malang, a lawyer, said nobody should be afraid of labeling as long as the media and their sources remained firm about fair treatment and objectivity.

Malang recalled that following the 2003 bombings in Davao City, Muslim residents complained of bombs lobbed outside a mosque or the minaret of another mosque having been attacked with gunfire.

But news reports had it that the unidentified attackers were merely "vigilantes."

"If such is the case, we might as well change the dictionary or encyclopedia meaning of the words 'terrorism' and 'vigilante.' It's like saying we can't call this or that black because it's the ace of flowers and not of spades," Malang said.

Muslims, for their part, should also speak louder in condemning terrorism, he added.

"If we can condemn a newspaper cartoonist, why not the source of his

misimpression and misinterpretation by other non-Muslims?" he said, referring to the outrage created by the so-called Mohammad cartoons.

Another Muslim lawyer pieced sad tales of Muslim experiences from terror labeling, not mainly by media but by sources of news stories among law enforcers.

He said that aside from the indiscriminate "warrantless arrests" of suspected Muslim individuals, news sources usually failed to identify victims of terrorism if they were Muslims, as what happened in the recent bombing of a cooperative convenient store in Jolo.

The lawyer, who asked not to be identified, challenged the media to do comparative reports on incidents of attacks "with the magnitude and characteristics of terrorism" when victims were non-Muslims.

"And what about the Good Friday rocket bomb attack that killed nine residents of Indanan, Sulu with Muslim-sounding names. How do we call that [attack]?" the lawyer asked. **Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau**



AT HOME

Communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal continues to speak of his organization's world view in the comforts of the jungles.

REUTERS

67,000 labor cases unresolved, says group

By Blanche S. Rivera

WHILE SOME 50,000 WORKERS MAKE NOISE on the streets today, 67,000 labor cases lie silent in the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC).

Up to 70 percent or seven out of 10 cases concern violations of labor laws, including employers' refusal or failure to give their workers the mandated wages and benefits, the Federation of Free Workers (FFW) said, citing government records.

The NLRC has only 54 labor arbiters nationwide to review the 67,000 pending cases.

Every month, at least an additional 35 cases are filed with the NLRC.

"Labor justice is needed here, although the Philippines is already better off than our neighbors in Asia," FFW chief legal counsel Sonny Matula said in a press briefing.

Each case takes an arbiter at least six months to a year to resolve. They are then usually appealed to the NLRC commissioner or the Court of Appeals, Matula said.

He said most of those who filed cases against their employers were members of unions or were educated enough to know their rights.

Many of them were security guards, janitors and others in the service sector.

Dip in union membership

New work arrangements, however, have caused a decline in the number of workers in the Philippines who belong to labor unions, the National Mediation and Conciliation Board (NMCB) said.

Only around 12 percent or 1.9 million of the 16 million formal sector workers are members of unions or organized labor groups, a smaller population than in the

1970s.

"This is because of new work arrangements and the global economy. More people would rather be independent contractors or entrepreneurs than employees," NMCB Executive Director Hans Cadac said at the Kapihan sa Sulo forum on Saturday.

The FFW urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to certify as urgent the pending bills in the Senate and House of Representatives that seek to strengthen the NLRC and enable it to hire more arbiters to hasten the resolution of labor cases.

Labor has priority over capital, says CBCP head

From page A1
plus a P50 emergency cost-of-living allowance. This brought the daily minimum wage to P325.

Bunye said Ms Arroyo will hold a "traditional dialogue with key leaders of organized labor, including representatives of the informal sector."

"We expect a candid exchange of views on how to promote job security, decent work and income extenders, especially to those earning the minimum wage and below," he said.

Also yesterday, the House committee on labor and employment called on businessmen to stop sounding the layoff scare and instead come up with better wages.

The committee also pushed for proposals to further cut the workers' tax burden and provide other nonwage benefits.

Acceptable hike

Representatives Roseller Barinaga (Nationalist People's Coalition, Zamboanga del Norte) and Ernesto "Bansai" Nieva (Liberal Party, Manila), committee chair and vice chair, respectively, said employers and workers should find a compromise for an acceptable wage increase.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry has warned that the across-the-board daily wage hike of P125 being pushed by labor and militant groups would cripple the economy, raise inflation and cause more unemployment.

"The House has passed a tax break bill which, hopefully, the Senate will consider as urgent," he said.

He was referring to separate bills authored by Albay Rep. Joey Salceda and Rep. Jesli Lapus which seek to readjust the tax brackets so that minimum wage earners would be exempted from the withholding tax.

Anakpawis party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano said there had not been any legislated wage increase since 2001, when President Macapagal-Arroyo took over from Joseph Estrada.

The perennial mass actions marking Labor Day in the country were indicative of something "very wrong" in the Philippines, Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, a former president of the bishops conference, said yesterday.

Deaf, dumb, blind

Saddled by low wages and "underhanded treatment," workers plead and bargain for more benefits and better working conditions, only to get no reaction from a govern-

ment that "plays deaf, dumb and blind," Cruz said in a statement.

"They are repeatedly told that the peso in their hands is becoming more and more valuable, yet the same peso they have buys less and less," he said.

"They are loudly informed that the national economy is improving fast. Yet their family economics is deteriorating even faster. They are told to be thrifty as if thrift for them were an option."

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales said earlier that workers shouldn't be

made to march in the streets to fight for increased wages and benefits.

He urged the government and businessmen to take it upon themselves to find ways to provide the workers with their just share of the fruits of their labors.

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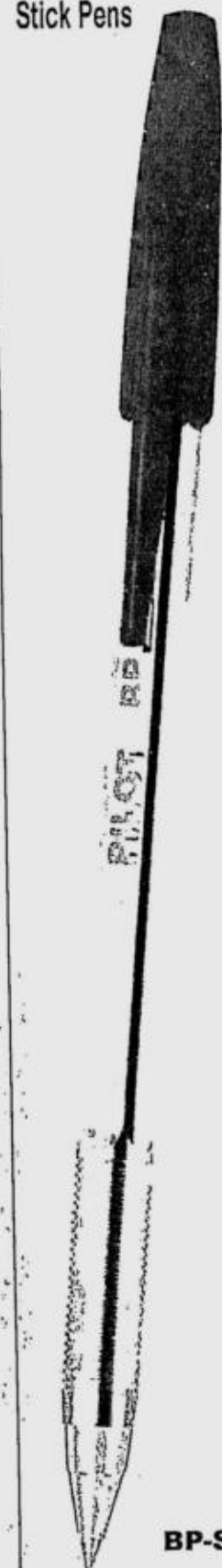
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Labor Day protest rallies set in the Visayas

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Carla R. Gomez and Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—THOUSANDS OF protesters are expected to mass in the streets of Iloilo, Capiz, Aklan, Negros Occidental and Cebu for Labor Day protests today.

In Iloilo City, around 2,000 protesters led by the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno and the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan are expected to hold a rally at the Rotary Amphitheater before marching down the main streets.

Similar rallies are expected in Roxas City in Capiz and in

Kalibo, Aklan.

In Cebu, about 1,500 workers, drivers and farmers plan to hold a protest march and conduct a signature drive to push for a P125 across-the-board wage increase, the release of militant leader Rep. Crispin Beltran and an end to the administration campaign for Charter change.

But the Associated Labor Union Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (ALU-TUCP) in Cebu will not join the rally.

Instead, the members of the country's biggest labor group will attend a mass at the St. Joseph the Worker Chapel. The group is demanding a P75 across-the-

board wage increase.

Labor Day in Negros Occidental will be marked by four separate rallies by different militant groups.

Thousands of militant workers from the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) region will also hold rallies in different parts of Southern

Tagalog to press the government for economic relief.

He said the workers decided to hold their rallies in the Calabarzon region, and not in Metro Manila, "to show the capitalists in the region how united we are."

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Labor Day showdown

From page A1

with our pants down," military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jose Angel Honrado said on the phone.

Earlier this week, an opposition source had told the INQUIRER about an alleged "Oplan Manggagawa" plot calling for street protests on Labor Day culminating in an attack by rebel soldiers and police on Malacañang and the installation of a new president by 5 p.m.

There was no independent confirmation of the document, which opposition lawmakers had branded as a Malacañang fabrication and which the Palace said was too grandiose a plot to be true.

Ms Arroyo was expected to meet last night with members of the Cabinet security cluster, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said.

"Our analysis as of last week is that they (destabilizers) don't have the capability," Gonzalez said in a phone interview.

Caught by surprise

Yesterday morning's attempt by about 200 protesters to occupy the Edsa Shrine caught Eastern Police District units by surprise since they were preparing to deploy to the area only in the afternoon.

The militants belonging to Bayan-Southern Tagalog arrived in 18 passenger jeeps and suddenly gathered near the shrine on the boundary of Mandaluyong and Quezon City.

Rally organizers said the protesters, carrying "GMA Resign Now" banners, included youth leader Ma. Theresa Pangilinan, who had heckled Ms Arroyo in a graduation ceremony in Cavite.

Tensions rose when the protesters started to march toward the shrine grounds just as the policemen prepared to drive them away. One rally marshal

was later briefly detained.

"This is private property. They don't have any permission to hold a rally here," district director Chief Supt. Charlemagne Alejandro said.

Some protesters tried to unfurl a streamer, and a policeman grabbed and took off with it. At least four protesters gave chase.

Still carrying the streamer, the policeman ran into Mercury Drug at Robinson's Galleria and the security guards shut the door.

But the protesters pushed at the door, wanting their streamer back. The glass door shattered.

'Do they want blood?'

A priest celebrating Mass at the shrine came outside and asked the protesters to go elsewhere for their rally, according to a police account.

"They can only hold a rally in a private place as long as they have permission from the owner. But church officials did not give them permission," Alejandro said.

The protesters soon agreed to leave, proceeding to the nearby People Power Monument, a freedom park.

The police vowed not to allow protesters to get near Malacañang.

"What is it really that they want?" police spokesperson Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao said. "Do they really want to draw blood? To provoke the government? They're testing the law."

Pagdilao said the government had granted rally permits for Plaza Miranda and Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila to show that it allowed the people to speak their minds.

But to march on Mendiola would violate Batas Pambansa Bilang 880, or the law on public assembly, since no permit had been granted for a rally there, he said.

From two to four people were killed near Mendiola in May Day protests in 2001 when thousands of supporters of deposed Presi-

dent Joseph Estrada stormed the Palace gates to protest his arrest.

Yesterday, a small group of Estrada's supporters was briefly allowed by police to lay a wreath "in honor of fallen comrades" at Mendiola.

Linggoy Alcuaz and Ronald Lumbao of the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP) led 20 others in laying flowers at the foot of the Chino Roces monument to remember those who died in the May 2001 clashes.

Today's protests would be the first major street challenge to Ms Arroyo since the Supreme Court last week struck down as unconstitutional the administration's calibrated preemptive response policy which allowed police to forcibly break up demonstrations.

Workers' demands

Besides opposing Malacañang-backed moves to change the Constitution and set up a parliamentary system of government, labor groups are also pressing for a P125 wage increase, wider tax exemptions and other relief packages, as well as an end to trade union and political repression.

"Obviously, the ploy is to make a lot of noise about violence while keeping silent about workers' grievances," Partido Manggagawa

Rep. Renato Magtubo said, referring to Defensor's statement that Malacañang might reimpose a state of national emergency if today's protests escalated into an armed threat against the government.

They are also protesting the filing of rebellion charges against six militant lawmakers and demanding the release of detained Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran.

The daily minimum wage, with allowances, for workers in Metro Manila is P325, less than half the recommended P690 daily cost of living for a family of six in the region.

Some workers' groups will start their protest today with a wreath-laying for Andres Bonifacio before marching to Mehan Garden, and on to Liwasang Bonifacio.

Others will assemble at Plaza Moriones, Plaza Miranda, T.M. Kalaw Avenue and Plaza Lacson

and then march to Liwasang Bonifacio, where they will hear a record-ed message from Beltran and have a phone patch with the Batasan 5 lawmakers who have been given protective custody by the House.

These are Representatives Satur Ocampo, Crispin Beltran, Rafael Mariano, Teodoro Casiño, Joel Vi-rador and Liza Maza.

To show their solidarity with Filipino workers, various international groups plan to march with

Militants train to counter PNP dispersal tactics

RIOT POLICE, BEWARE.

Truncheons and water cannons may have worked wonders in dispersing rallies in the past, but today's Labor Day protests just might be different.

Militants yesterday said they were now ready to take on abusive policemen with their newly learned taekwondo and karate moves.

They call it the Basic Antidispersal Training.

Leaders and staff of left-wing militant groups conducted a two-hour crash course in basic self-defense at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, anticipat-

ing possible violence in today's protests.

The trainer was Noel Matematico, a veteran martial arts practitioner who is also a local leader of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas in Rodriguez (formerly Montalban) town in Rizal.

He taught the militants how to deflect blows from truncheons, as well as how to maintain their ranks against the onslaught of water cannons.

A group of protesters even simulated a police line, complete with sticks similar in size and thickness to the batons used by police.

DJ Yap

them today. They include labor advocates from Taiwan, Australia, Denmark, Belgium, the United States, Canada, South Korea, Hong Kong and Nepal.

Thousands of workers and militant youths are also expected to hold protests in different parts of the country, from Luzon to Mindanao. In Mindanao, rally organizers said they expected 60,000 people to take part in marches and rallies.

Among places where protests are planned for today are the

Baguio-Cordillera area, Pampan-ga, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Tarlac, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Quezon, Rizal, Naga, Albay, Masbate, Cebu, Negros, Leyte, Iloilo, Davao, Misamis Oriental, South Cotabato, North Cotabato, Davao del Sur, Agusan, Surigao and Zamboanga del Norte. With reports from Christine O. Aven-daño, Blanche S. Rivera, Michael Lim Ubac, Leila S. Salaverria and Margaux C. Ortiz in Manila; and the PDI Visayas Bureau

Workers warned on agenda of middle class

From page A1
of the security highlight of today's celebration.

The administration has put the security forces on high alert in the wake of scare reports of plans of another power grab, and warned it would reimpose the emergency proclamation if Labor Day demonstrations became violent and would "turn out to be a cover for an armed [attack] to topple

the government."

There is nothing the government can do to stop workers from celebrating their day, but under this state of insecurity and nervousness on the part of a regime under siege, there is danger that, first, disturbances in the streets would be used by the government as an excuse to clamp repressive measures and, second, nonworking-class groups (especially the

middle classes) would ride the rallies and use them as feeding trough to promote middle-class interests unsympathetic to those of the working class.

The administration has already tried to prepare the mind of the public to link the Left to any disturbance with the warning of President Macapagal-Arroyo's chief of staff, Michael Defensor, that it had received reports that the political opposition and the Left had hatched a plot, called "Oplan Manggagawa," to topple the President on Labor Day.

According to press reports, the plan called for marches on Edsa, gatherings of opposition leaders and church groups, and attacks by rebellious soldiers and police on Malacañang.

Excuse for crackdown?

The mainstream opposition has denied the existence of such a plot and, from all appearances, the government seemed to be laying the ground to use Labor Day incidents as an excuse to crack down on both the Left and the mainstream opposition.

It is entirely possible that leftist and working-class groups can mobilize up to 30,000 or even more protesters in Manila, let alone the urban centers in the provinces. This size of protest would put to shame what middle-class militants have been able to marshal in their rallies over the past eight months to demand the resignation of Ms Arroyo.

Mass muscle

The Left and the working class have provided mass muscle for the middle class-led rallies on Edsa and in Makati City. Because of their ability to mobilize warm bodies, the Left and working class could be used today by the regime as scapegoat for disturbances in the streets, and by the middle-class militants as cannon fodder and shock troops against riot police.

What will be put to test in the streets today is the issue of how much restraint the government will use in breaking up demonstrations in the wake of a Supreme Court decision on April 25 declaring unconstitutional the government's calibrated preemptive response (CPR) policy.

It "has no place in our legal firmament and must be struck down as a darkness that shrouds freedom," said the decision. "It merely confuses our people and is used by some police agents to justify abuses."

Riding on street protests

The court directed the govern-

ment to refrain from using the CPR and instead strictly observe maximum tolerance, which is intended by law for the benefit of protesters and not of government.

But the government has warned militant groups against testing its patience, saying the ruling "was not a carte blanche for fomenting anarchy and destabilization."

It said: "We must warn those who intend to overthrow the government not to test the mettle of authorities, who will move forcefully in case of a clear and present danger to the Republic."

It is also entirely possible that militant middle-class groups would ride on the working-class rallies. Should there be a united front between them, the working class will not benefit from this broad coalition to push the middle classes' demand to topple the government.

Bearing the brunt

Under no circumstances should the working class allow the middle classes to hijack from the workers the agenda of the streets, especially on Labor Day.

In the case of a crackdown by a nervous and paranoid government, the working class and the Left will feel its brunt, more than the middle classes, especially those entrenched in Congress.

Thus, it would be to the best interests of the working class to separate itself from the agenda of the middle classes and promote workers' interests independent of the politics of the middle-class militants, whose agenda is now focused on blocking the so-called people's initiative campaign for constitutional change sponsored by the Arroyo administration.

Avoiding same mistake

"People power," largely a middle-class movement, has not benefited the ideological objectives of the Left and the underclasses of Philippine society.

The Left boycotted the 1986 "People Power" revolution—a boycott that left them out in the cold in reorienting Philippine society. It should not compound that historic mistake by entering into any kind of tactical alliance with the middle classes. Such an alliance has reduced the Left as shock absorbers of the crackdown of a repressive government.

The Left should make today a historic turning point of their rupture with the middle classes that have used the working class as cutting edge in the conflict between the "in" and "out" factions of the elite.

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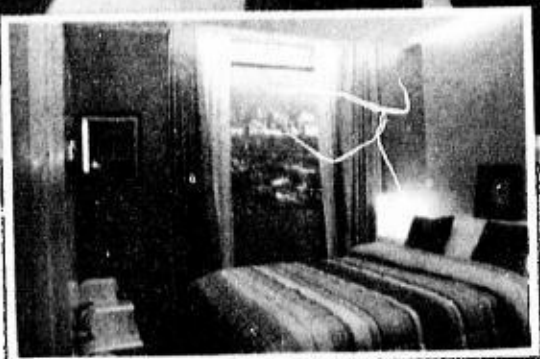
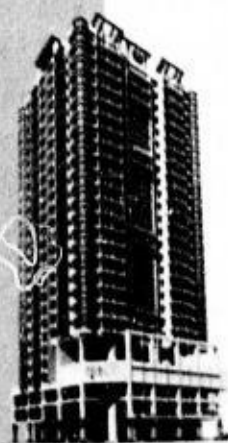


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Vatican leader calls for 'Da Vinci' boycott

From page A1

comments in a speech at the Pontifical Holy Cross University, which is run by the conservative Catholic movement Opus Dei, the Ansa news agency reported.

"I hope all of you boycott this film," the agency quoted Amato as saying.

He said the film, based on the best-selling novel by Dan Brown, was full of "offenses, slander, historical and theological errors concerning Jesus, the Gospel and the Church."

"Slander, offenses and errors that if they were directed toward the Koran or the Shoah would have justifiably provoked a worldwide revolt. Yet because they were directed toward the Catholic Church, they remain 'unpunished,'" Ansa quoted Amato as saying.

Church officials have spoken out repeatedly against the novel and the upcoming film adaptation, which stars Tom Hanks and Audrey Tautou. The movie is scheduled for release May 19.

In the novel, Jesus is believed to have married Mary Magdalene who bore his child. The book further claims that Opus Dei, which is close to the Vatican, and the Catholic Church were at the center covering this up.

Last year, Italian Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone—Amato's predecessor at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith—called for a boycott of the book.

And earlier this month, the preacher for the papal household, the Rev. Raniero Cantalamessa, denounced theories that make huge profits in denying Church teaching about Jesus—an obvious reference to the film.

Opus Dei

Opus Dei, which is portrayed as a murderous, power-hungry sect in the novel, has specifically refrained from publicly calling for a boycott of the film, aware that bitter criticism of Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" had helped popularize that movie.

Even so, Opus Dei has asked Sony to put a

disclaimer on the movie saying it is a work of fantasy. Sony hasn't responded to that request but its spokespersons have repeatedly said the company views "The Da Vinci Code" as a work of fiction that isn't meant to harm any organization.

Amato's comments were the second this week against the film by Church officials in Rome.

Earlier this week, the interior ministry took down an enormous ad promoting the film that was plastered on the scaffolding of a Rome church after

Church officials complained that the film was against Christ and the Catholic Church.

Australian reaction

In Sydney, a Church group has also launched a website and a series of cinema adverts challenging elements of the "Da Vinci Code" to coincide with the release of the movie version.

The A\$50,000 (US\$38,000) campaign by Anglican Sydney Media urges viewers of the film and readers of Brown's multimillion selling book

to seek the truth about Jesus Christ.

"Our concern is that 'The Da Vinci Code' will mislead people about the truth," Bishop Robert Forsyth, the group's chair, said in a statement on Sunday.

"We are not afraid of the film. We are not seeking to discourage people from seeing it," Forsyth added.

"But we are well aware of the power popular films have in filling the information void about Jesus."

The book has already spawned several other websites and books seeking to debunk Brown's claims. AP

Church experts tell brides ...

From page A1

gathered last week to discuss the liturgy of marriage all agreed that before couples can say their "I do's," they would have to be reminded of some do's and don'ts in weddings.

And this includes fashion.

"The sacred character of the liturgy of marriage requires corresponding modesty in the attire of the bride and the bridal entourage and in the choice of songs, which should be liturgically appropriate," according to part of the five-point statement on the results of Liturgy Week meeting on April 24-27.

The occasion, sponsored yearly by Benedictine monks, tackled key issues in the sacrament of marriage, particularly its liturgy or how it should be properly celebrated in clear, Christian tradition.

Fr. Anscar Chupungco, San Beda College rector and coordinator for the Liturgy Week, said the reminder on the bride's dress was not meant to stifle her fashion sense.

Sacred activity

"It's just about wearing the appropriate clothes for a deeply sacred activity such as marriage because, sometimes, people tend to forget about it," he told the INQUIRER in an interview.

"Marriage is admittedly a legal or canonical contract that must be respected at all times," he said in his lecture titled "Liturgical Theology of Marriage."

"However, marriage among Christians is also a sacrament whose meaning and purpose are drawn from the 'marriage between Christ and the Church.' Christ is the third party to the sacramental union of husband and wife."

Chupungco, an expert on the liturgy (generally referring to the body of rituals representing worship), said the public shouldn't take the reminder to mean that the Church would impose a dress code.

Common sense

On some occasions, it's the couturiers who "expose" brides with their designs, he said.

"It would be terrible [for priests] to decide on the specifications, say, on how long a gown should be," he said. "We leave it to [the cou-

ple's] sense of the sacred, of the profane, and their common sense and propriety."

Simply put, if it can't be worn at Sunday Mass, it can't be worn at a wedding, said the executive secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines' Commission on Liturgy.

In the statement, participants in the Liturgy Week also recognized the need to "explain more fully the texts of the rite." They include scriptural readings, the nuptial blessing, and gestures and symbols.

Guideposts

Nowadays, Chupungco observed that couples planning to wed were largely unaware of the meaning and significance of these matters—not just as Church symbols—but as guideposts in their married life.

Not every bride or groom is aware that candles represent the presence of the light of the Holy Spirit, that the joining of the right hands is a sign of their covenant, and that the arthae are a symbol of mutual support dating back to Roman times.

The veil, for instance, was originally a symbol of a married woman. It has been reduced to a mere decoration these days, Chupungco said.

More active role

"Many consider the marriage rite itself a formality," he lamented. "Sadly, the focus is on the celebrations before and after the wedding. It seems the highlight is the party or the honeymoon."

Couples should not "cancel out the marriage rite," Chupungco said, noting that they couldn't proceed with the rest of their celebration without it.

"It's a central rite connected to the Mass," he said.

To impress upon couples the importance of the marriage rite, the Liturgy Week gathering recommended that the bride and the groom be given an "active part in the preparation of the liturgy of marriage."

The choice of prayers and scriptural readings and the composition of the general intercessions also need contributions from the couple, according to the experts.



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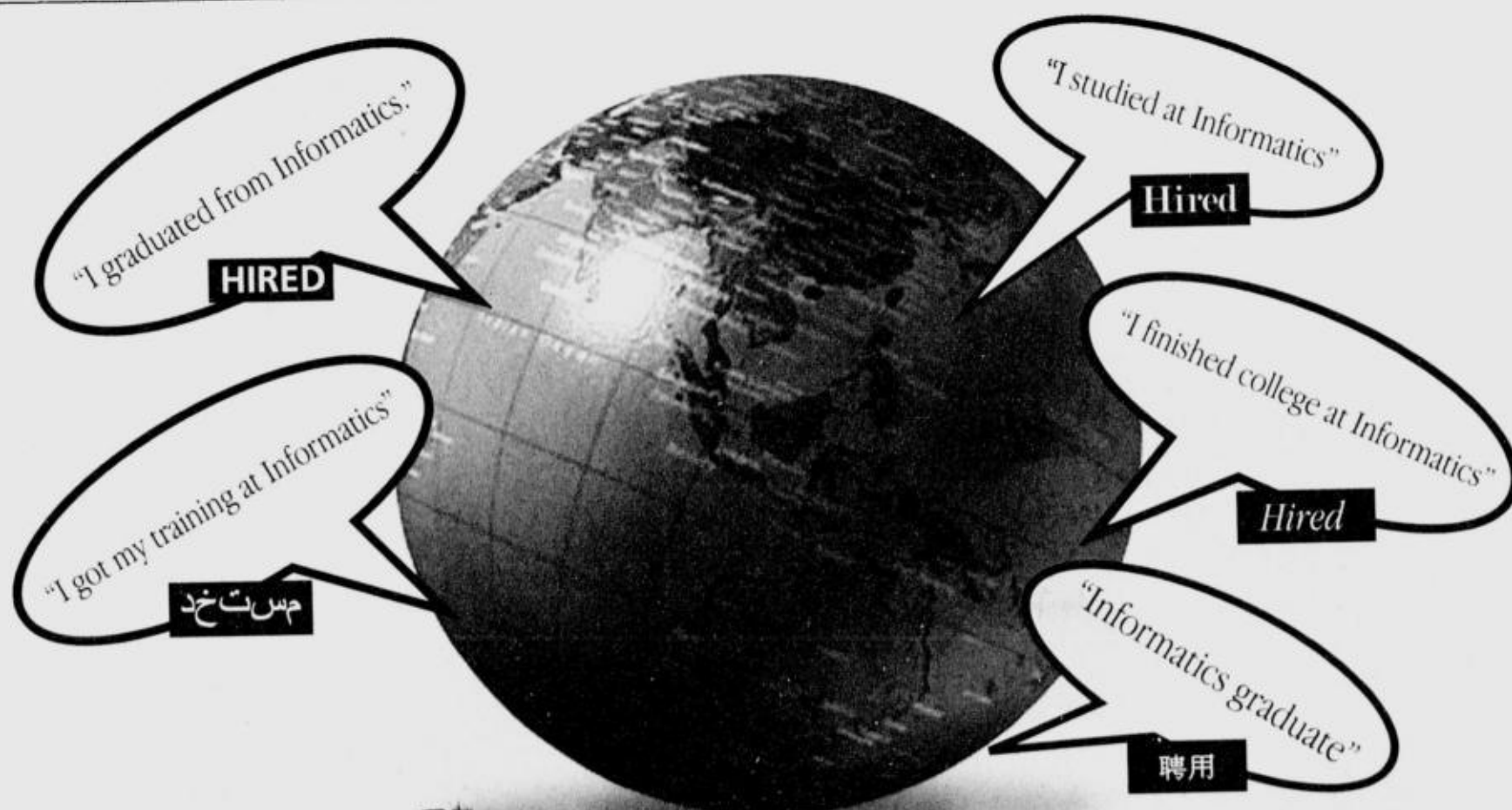
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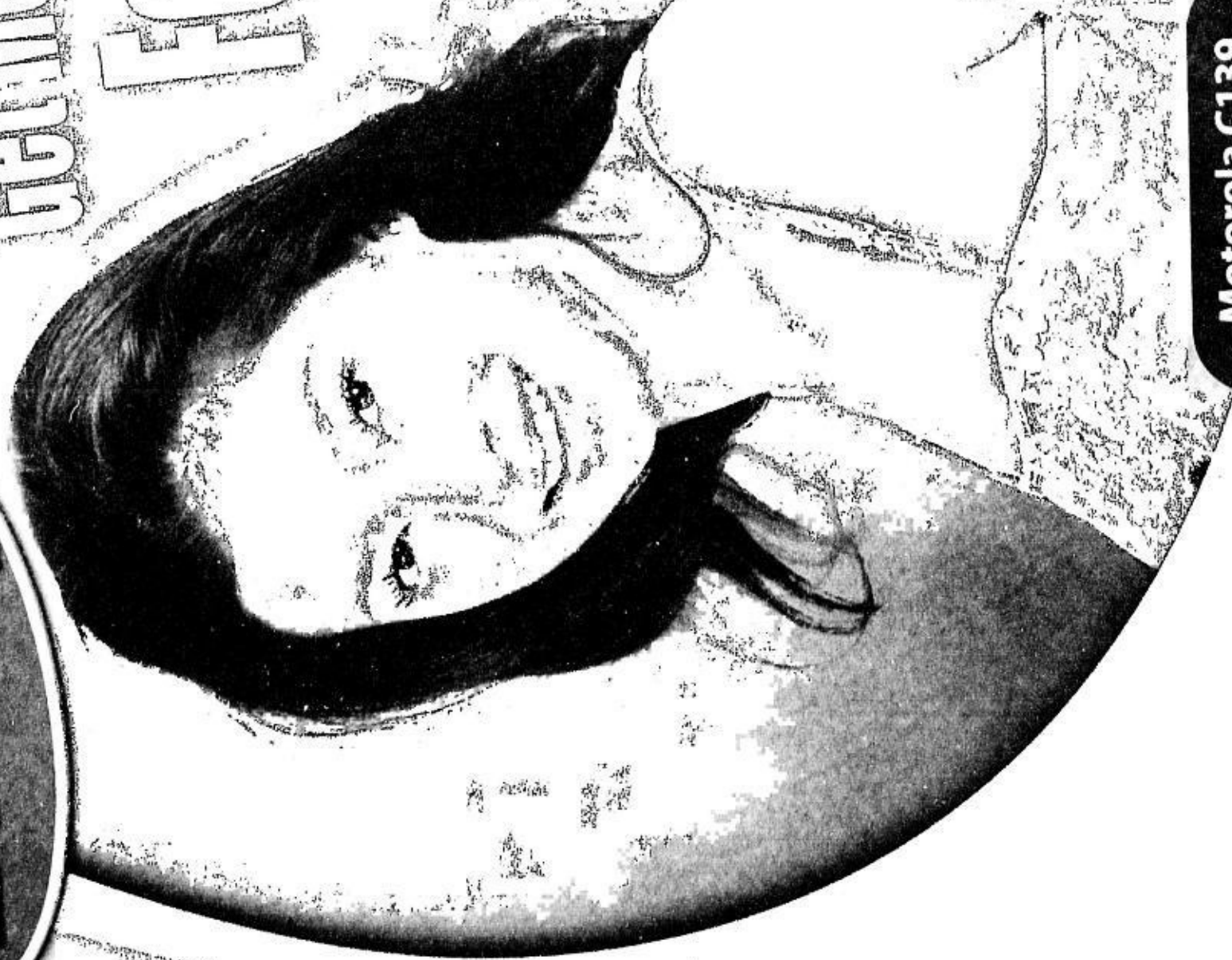
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Five suspected robbers killed in QC shootout

By DJ Yap

RESIDENTS OF PUROK 20, Barangay Commonwealth in Quezon City were enjoying a sleepy Sunday afternoon when they were jolted by a series of gunfire that erupted at the heart of the slum community.

When the shooting subsided, five men lay dead, while a sixth was rushed to the hospital, ending what the police said was a shootout with members of a criminal gang.

According to Quezon City Police District director Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan Jr., the six belonged to the notorious Ballasta Group, a gang composed of robbers and hired guns with connections to other crime syndicates.

The police identified the slain suspects only by their aliases. But Rosie Musinos, widow of one of the suspects, Joel Musinos, identified the others as Jose Nugit, Efan Nebre, a certain "Paterno" and one "Roger." The sixth suspect taken to an unspecified hospital was Dante Navarra, said Musinos.

Under surveillance

Investigators said the men had been under surveillance for more than a year by agents of the Quezon City police intelligence division.

When an agent entered the compound at about 2:30 p.m., he was recognized by one of the suspects who began shooting at him, an intelligence agent who requested anonymity for security reasons said.

Within moments, a shootout ensued as the suspects traded gunshots with police, the agent said.

Rubout?

But Musinos said there was no shootout at all. She claimed that she saw her husband lying on his belly with his arms up, yet the policemen still shot him, a charge the agents denied.

Musinos also denied the police's claim that her husband had a gun and was a member of the notorious gang.

"The other victims were his family members and friends. They were just having drinks. My husband used to sell fish balls for a living, but today he was taking a break since it's summer," she told the INQUIRER.

Radovan told reporters that the suspects had killed a number of policemen and had been known to stage robberies.

Purok 20 is a hard-to-locate slum area found at the rear of Ideal Subdivision in neighboring Barangay Holy Spirit. It has narrow side streets and creeks, with some houses separated by bridges made of wooden planks.



SHOOTOUT or rubout? A woman cries over one of the slain suspects. RYAN LIM

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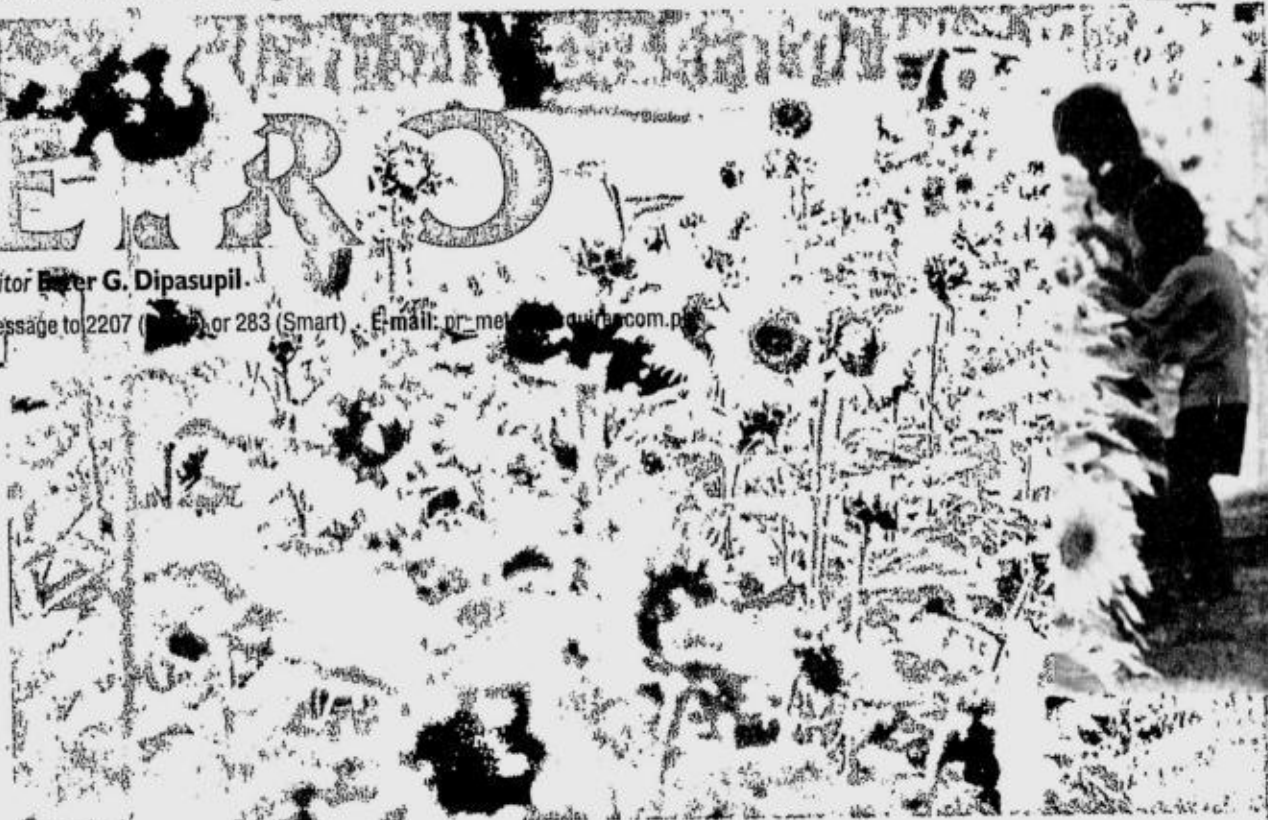
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SUNNY VIEW

A street lined with sunflowers greets those who enter the UP campus in Diliman, Quezon City.

ROMY HOMILLADA

ISANG BUKAS NA LIHAM SA MGA TUNAY NA IDOL NG BAYAN



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'Batasan 5' to leave House Thursday

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE SO-CALLED "BATASAN 5" WILL leave the House of Representatives on Thursday to appear in a Makati court where they face rebellion charges.

Representatives Liza Maza of Gabriela, Satur Ocampo, Teodoro Casino and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, and Rafael Mariano of Anakpawis, will be joined by their colleague, Rep. Crispin Beltran of Anakpawis, who was transferred last week to the Philippine Heart Center after being detained in Camp

Crame for two months.

This would be the first time that Ocampo, Casino, Virador and Mariano would be leaving the House of Representatives. The four, along with Maza, have been holed up at the Batasan complex since Feb. 27 to avoid being arrested by the police. Maza, on the other hand, has left the House twice—for a Senate bicameral meeting and for an appointment with her dentist.

The six solons, along with over 40 other persons, have been charged with rebellion for allegedly taking part in an "in-

tricate web" of conspiracies to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo.

They have been summoned to appear at the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 137 at 10 a.m. Thursday.

Attendance compulsory

"All of them have to attend because they received subpoenas... I don't think they will be arrested because the court has not issued arrest warrants yet. They cannot be arrested," said Amylyn Sato, one of the lawmakers' lawyers from the Public Interest Law Center.

"The court sent a copy of the subpoena to the Sergeant-at-Arms (of the House of Representatives) so I think they (House security officers) will be the ones escorting them," Sato told the Inquirer.

The lawyer said Judge Jenny Lind Aldecoa-Delorino has required the lawmakers to be present during the hearing as the court would take up their motion for the nullification of the rebellion case filed against them by the Department of Justice.

The lawmakers filed last Monday a motion asking the court to strike out an amended criminal information the DOJ

filed on April 21, where some 48 individuals, including former Sen. Gringo Honasan, were indicted for allegedly taking part in a conspiracy between communist rebels and renegade soldiers to violently overthrow the President. The supposed plot was supposed to culminate today, Labor Day.

The case was an update of the rebellion charges filed by a DOJ panel against Beltran and recaptured 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan on Feb. 28. The charges against the two have already been elevated to the court.

Business sector pitches in to save environment

Collection of recyclables nets P1.4M in 4 years

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IT HAS SAVED MORE THAN A THOUSAND trees, recycled tons of garbage and extended the life span of garbage dumps.

Now on its fifth year, the Recyclables Collection Event (RCE), a campaign organized annually by the Philippine Business for the Environment (PBE), continues to encourage corporations nationwide to recycle the trash they generate, instead of just throwing it all away.

"We are spreading the awareness that you can turn your trash into cash," said Nancy Pilien, PBE project officer.

The PBE, a non-stock, non-profit organization formed in 1999, has been helping promote environmental awareness in the business sector because it believes "that the business community has a unique and important role in providing solutions to the country's environmental problems."

Its members include the country's top business companies like Pilipinas Shell, the SGV Group of Companies, Unilever Philippines, Ayala Corp., Caltex Phils., Nestlé and San Miguel Corp., among others.

One-day event

Among the group's activities is the RCE, a one-day collection event for recyclable materials usually held on Earth Day week every April. Corporations, establishments, organizations and even individuals are encouraged to bring their recyclables like used paper; old electronics, office equipment and car batteries; PET (a type of plastic material) bottles; aluminum cans and used oil to designated drop off areas all over the country where these can be redeemed for cash at buying stations set up by recyclers.

According to Pilien, the RCE is a promotional activity for its year-round Industrial Waste Exchange Program (IWEP), a garbage recovery program in

which an industry is linked to a buyer that can reuse or recycle the waste materials generated by the other.

By hooking up waste generators with recyclers, the RCE has turned into an event where everyone involved end up being a winner. Contributors would get cash for their recyclables while recycling firms would have new materials to process and later on, resell.

Ultimate beneficiary

But the ultimate beneficiary would be the environment that was spared from the tons of trash that would have been dumped in landfills.

"The RCE is an initiative of the PBE and the firms organize it with us. What we do is contact recyclers, and these are environmentally compliant recyclers. We see it these are not fly-by-night recyclers," Pilien said.

Since its inception in 2002, Pilien said the drive has generated P1.43 million worth of recycled materials—which would have needed 91 garbage trucks with a 10-ton capacity each—for transport to a dump and would have occupied 913 cubic meters of landfill space.

"And it's been increasing. Just last year, the collection was worth more than P500,000," she said, compared to the average collection of P300,000 from 2002 to 2003.

Over 1,200 trees saved

From 2002 to last year, the PBE has estimated that the 58,661 kilos of waste paper that were turned over for recycling spared 1,219 seven-year-old trees from being cut down to manufacture new paper.

From used batteries, a total of 186,950 kilos of lead were recovered while 34,905 liters of sulfuric acid were treated. Also recovered were 1,495 kilos of PET plastics, 560 kilos of non-PET plastics, 919 kilos of aluminum from 919



SOME of the recyclable materials brought to a designated drop-off area in Makati City.

REM ZAMORA

kilos of aluminum cans, 5,120 grams of precious metals and 456,060 kilos of base metal.

This year, the RCE was held in five areas nationwide, including the Rockwell Club in Makati, a venue where the event has been conducted since the campaign began in 2002.

Barangay involvement

Organizers of the RCE in Rockwell went further this year by trying to involve the surrounding barangays in the area in the collection drive.

"We contribute more than 20 percent to the collection every year. Hopefully we can top this, that's why we encouraged the involvement of the barangays," Red Cruz, Rockwell Land Manager said.

(It's not just for the project, but also for them to understand recycling... so it's

a double process," he added.

According to Rockwell organizers, they were able to collect P51,000 worth of recycled materials in 2004. The figure, however, went up by over a 100 percent last year, hitting P105,000. (The PBE will formally present the results of the collection drive this year to Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes tomorrow).

In addition, more recycling firms participated this year in the Makati leg of the RCE. From eight firms in 2005, 10 took part this year, including Clean Leaf Industrial Sales, a Malabon-based firm that recycles used industrial oil.

"Our target is to have establishments around the area as our clients. What we do is process used oil and those that we could fully recover, we sell at a lower price to small firms," said Jun Carmona, Clean Leaf production manager.

Carmona said the firm's efforts were worthwhile as a liter of oil, if disposed of in a careless manner, could contaminate a million liters of water.

And this is exactly what the RCE wants to help prevent—the gradual destruction of the environment by the indiscriminate throwing of garbage.

Environmental impact

"Aside from the environmental benefits that we get from it, the awareness of the firms and individuals that are involved is intensified. It's really supposed to be the first priority—that they should be aware of the environmental impact," Pilien said.

In the end, it all boils down to one thing: It's not all about making money, it's also about doing your part to help save the environment.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Monday, May 1, 2006

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ABC 5			WNCN (Ranun)	National Geographic	Volleyball League	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Outstanding	Sento	How Clean Is Your House	ABC Action	Gulong Ng Pasko	Sa Piling Mo	Panday	Wonderful Life	Fast Factor		Telco TV	Insider
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Army	E Buzz	Navajo	Sakura Wars	TV Patrol World	Sakura Wars	ABC Action	Spooky Scary				OK! Pinoy	House	Justice League	Samurai Jack
AXN																Mucha Lucha	Duck Dodgers		
Cartoon Network	Pekin Academy	Richie Rich	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	Tom & Jerry	Baby Looney Tunes	CodeName Kids	The Simpsons	The Simpsons	Don't Talk To Me	Don't Talk To Me	Y-G-O Double Duel	Y-G-O Double Duel		The Simpsons		Timon & Pumbaa			Somebody's Having a Party
Cinemax		The Snow Walker				Commandments													
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live	Profiler	Business International	World Sport	World News Asia				World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crisis/Suspense		What Should You Do?		Law & Order	Monster Garage	Profiler	Profiler	Profiler	Mastermind	Law & Order	Law & Order	Law & Order		World News Asia	World News Asia	Bones			
Discovery Channel		U-Jump One		U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One		U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One	U-Jump One
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series			Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series		Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series
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TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

'Edsa Tres' ralliers tell their stories

By DJ Yap

HISTORY IS OFTEN TOLD FROM THE standpoint of victors. But the vanquished have their own way of telling their story and rewriting their history.

One example is May 1, 2001, or what has come to be known as "Edsa Tres," the poor man's People Power.

Participants of Edsa Tres have been holding a series of "kwentuhan bayan," or storytelling sessions about the events of that day, hoping that their tales may someday find their way to the national consciousness.

Last Friday, at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, they spoke of grief and suffering, rage and hopelessness, even triumph. For in the darkest hour of Edsa Tres, they said they were able to prove themselves a force capable of a spontaneous uprising against the ouster of former President Joseph Estrada.

According to Marivic Raquiza, national coordinator of Global Call to Action against Poverty, history should recognize the nameless and faceless individuals behind Edsa Tres.

"Their stories and narratives should also be part of history, not just history of the intellectuals and those in power, but also history from the perspective of the poor and the oppressed," she said.

Led by Gcap, the speakers recounted their experiences during the five-day gathering that culminated in a violent dispersal at the gates of Malacañang.

Twenty-year-old Luis Granados, a member of a political clan in Kawit, Cavite, remembered the almost chaotic atmosphere as the marchers began gathering at the foot of the

Edsa Shrine in the days leading to Labor Day.

On April 30, the protesters—tired, hungry and lacking sleep—began arguing about whether or not to begin their march to Mendiola, he said.

"Some of the leaders said not yet, but most of the crowd had gotten impatient and angry, so they began to break away from the group," said Granados, who followed the marchers on board a car with his cousin.

Near Mendiola, the crowd sat in the middle of the road. One woman began to lead a prayer when, suddenly, a shot rang out.

Granados said he saw the woman beside him fall down, with blood flowing from a gunshot wound. "I was 15 years old then, and someone seated beside me just got shot," he said, recalling the shock.

After the shooting, apparently the work of a sniper, all hell broke loose: "We began running for our lives," he said, adding that he never knew what happened to the woman.

Granados found himself seeking shelter in a boarding house at the University Belt area. The landlady took him in and hid him from the riot police.

Granados said there were countless other stories like his that begged to be told about Edsa Tres.

"I'm here because I want to tell this story that was never written in history books. This is the poor's version of history, of Edsa Tres and the people who marched and showed our force," he said.

Marietta Sumagang, 51, a vendor in Quezon City, said many of them were "so terrified" to speak out about their ordeal, fearing government reprisal.

"But if we don't speak up, people will never know the truth," she said.

Couple nabbed for extorting money from Japanese trader

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A FORMER ENTERTAINER AND HER HUSBAND were arrested last week by National Bureau of Investigation agents after allegedly extorting over P1.6 million from a Japanese businessman in Pasay City.

Maria Lourdes Dizon and Arnel Punzalan, both of Block 29, Lot 11 Dumaguete St., South City Homes in Biñan, Laguna, have been charged with robbery and extortion in the Pasay City Prosecutor's Office.

An investigation by the NBI National Capital Region showed that victim Jiro Miyamoto met Dizon in Japan in 1996.

Miyamoto became smitten with the suspect, who confided her financial problems in him. The Japanese promised to send her money when Dizon went back to the Philippines.

For almost a decade, Miyamoto sent over P1.5 million to the suspect, which she promised to use in her application for a Japanese visa.

However, when Miyamoto arrived in the Philippines last April 18 to visit Dizon, she and her husband began threatening him if he did not give them more money. But after he gave them over P150,000, the couple kept on demanding more cash.

The victim, who confirmed with the Japanese Embassy that Dizon had not applied for a visa, then sought the NBI's help.

NBI agents arrested the couple during an entrapment operation in a Pasay City Hotel last April 24.

NBI NCR executive officer Ferdinand Lavin said the agents seized a toy gun from Punzalan, which he allegedly used to scare Miyamoto.

TV program for teachers launched

By Alcuin A. Papa and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS IS now on the boob tube.

The Department of Education has launched the "Teleserye Para kay Ma'am," a weekly TV program over government-run NBN-4, that aims to enrich the skills of teachers in English, Math and Science through remote or distance learning.

DepEd officer-in-charge Fe Hidalgo said the TV program's pilot episode, titled "Science Process Skills: Making Predictions, Investigating, and Pushes and Pulls," was aired yesterday. It was hosted by Dr. Joan Belen and May Ionda of the UP National Institute of Science and Mathematics Education (Nismed).

The program will run from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., every Sunday over NBN-4. Hidalgo said the DepEd was preparing 23 episodes on each of the following subject areas: Elementary and Secondary English, Mathematics and Science.

Meanwhile, hundreds of public elementary and high school teachers in Pasig City are undergoing training on English, Science and Mathematics.

Their trainers are from UP and the Ateneo de Manila University.

The lectures, attended by more than 700 teachers, are being held at the Rizal High School in Pasig City. The lectures began on April 17 and will end on June 2.

The city government is shouldering all the expenses for the training, the city information office said in a statement.

Ninety-nine high school teachers and 124 elementary teachers are undergoing training in English which is being handled by the AdMU Center for Education Development.

On the other hand, the UP Nismed is conducting the training in Science and Technology for 104 elementary and 134 high school teachers, as well as the training in Mathematics for 134 elementary and 117 high school teachers.

METROBRIEFS

Man electrocuted in QC while picking fruits

A 24-YEAR-OLD man was electrocuted while he was trying to pick a mango fruit the other day in Quizon City. Michael Benedicto died instantly after suffering burns when he accidentally touched a live wire while atop a mango tree at 41 Mabsimbo corner Laguna Streets in San Francisco Del Monte, Barangay Manresa. Investigation showed that the victim was trying to reach a fruit using an aluminum pipe when it got into contact with a live wire, according to a report by P03 Jun Fortunato of the city police criminal investigation division. Benedicto was electrocuted and died instantly, police said.

DJ Yap

Gunned down inside a cab

A CAB driver was gunned down by two men in Quezon City before dawn yesterday. Police are still investigating the motive in the killing of Hugo Intoy who was shot dead by unidentified suspects inside his taxi, with plate number PYC-357, at 5 a.m. Witness Carlos Grabanto told police he was pushing his cart along 11th Street in Barangay Damayang Lagi when he heard three succes-

sive gunshots. He said he saw two men, one of whom was holding a gun, alighting from the victim's taxi, according to a report by Investigator SP02 Felicisimo Cuaresma. Barangay watchmen rushed Grabanto to the St. Luke's Medical Center, but he died while undergoing surgery. He sustained two gunshot wounds in the stomach, police said.

DJ Yap

Party marks 33rd founding anniversary in Tondo

THE PARTIDO Demokratiko-Sosyalista ng Pilipinas will celebrate its 33rd founding anniversary by bringing its call for social revolution to Tondo, Manila. PDSP members led by National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, party chairperson and co-founder, along with the multi-sectoral social movement Aksyon Sambayanan, will hold a rally today at the Del Pan Sports Complex in Parola, Tondo. Representatives from the Church and religious organizations, the Armed Forces, police, progressive politicians, as well as professionals, workers, peasants, urban poor and women will join the event, dubbed as the Fist-Rose Revolution, after the international symbol of social democrats.

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The WORLD

Tens of thousands march in New York antiwar rally

NEW YORK—TENS OF THOUSANDS of antiwar demonstrators marched in New York on Saturday, demanding the immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq and vowing a summer of protests ahead of mid-term elections in November.

The protesters included national figures like civil rights leader Jesse Jackson, Oscar-winning actress Susan Sarandon and the prominent antiwar activist Cindy Sheehan.

The mass rally was organized by a broad coalition of groups representing veterans, trade unions, military families, environmentalists and civil rights activists.

The police declined to offer an estimate for the size of the protest, while organizers claimed the turnout was as high as 300,000.

"This is what democracy looks like," said chief organizer Leslie Cagan, national coordinator of the antiwar lobby United for Peace and Justice.

"We are here to send a message to the White House and the Congress that we must end this war now, bring our troops home and also end the attack on our civil rights at home," Cagan said.

While the main focus of the march was Iraq, Cagan said the rally was also aimed at protesting any plans for military intervention in Iran and at setting the domestic political agenda ahead of the congressional elections later in the year.

"Today we march, tomorrow we organize and in November we vote," Cagan told cheering supporters.

Police were out in force as the demonstration wound its way through lower Manhattan toward City Hall.

"Our sole aim is to facilitate the march," said Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly.

The protest was held a day af-

ter the Pentagon announced that 69 US soldiers had died in Iraq in April, and many marchers carried photos of family members killed while serving in the armed forces since the war began.

"We need to bring the soldiers back," said Sarandon. "And we also need to stop all this money being poured into this horrible crime of a war, so that it can be used where it's urgently needed at home."

Sheehan, who became a leading antiwar activist after her soldier son was killed in Iraq, said the massive turnout for the march reflected a growing groundswell of US public opinion against continued military involvement in Iraq.

"We are not the fringe anymore. We are mainstream America," said Sheehan, who gained prominence when she camped outside President George W. Bush's Texas ranch last year to demand a meeting with the US leader.

"To be anti-George Bush is to be pro-American," she said.

Another prominent participant in the march was Daniel Ellsberg, the former military analyst who precipitated a national uproar in 1971 when he leaked the Pentagon Papers, the US military's account of activities during the Vietnam War, to The New York Times.

The release of the documents succeeded in substantially erod-

ing public support for the war, and Ellsberg urged those in the Bush administration opposed to the current policy in Iraq to follow his example.

"My message is: Don't just resign. Leak," Ellsberg said. "I don't think George Bush is stupid. I think he's dangerous, and he has to be stopped."

After reaching City Hall, the organizers held a five-hour festival, during which they sought signatures for a "Peace Voter Pledge," vowing not to vote for any candidate in the November elections who does not publicly call for a speedy end to military involvement in Iraq. **AFP**

US pays for 150 Iraq health clinics, but manages to build only 20

A \$243-MILLION PROGRAM LED by the US Army Corps of Engineers to build 150 health care clinics in Iraq has in some cases produced little more than empty shells of crumbling concrete and shattered bricks cemented together into uneven walls, two reports by a federal oversight office have found.

The reports, released Saturday, detail a close inspection of five of the clinics in the northern city of Kirkuk as well as a sweeping audit of the entire program, which began in March 2004 as a heavily promoted effort to improve health care for ordinary Iraqis. The reports say that none of the five clinics in Kirkuk and only 20 of the original 150 across the country will be completed without new financing.

Written by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, an independent office, the reports

cite a wide range of factors, including disputes among Iraqi construction companies and problems with local materials, that have contributed to the program's failures. The American company Parsons, the prime contractor for the work, also comes in for stiff criticism.

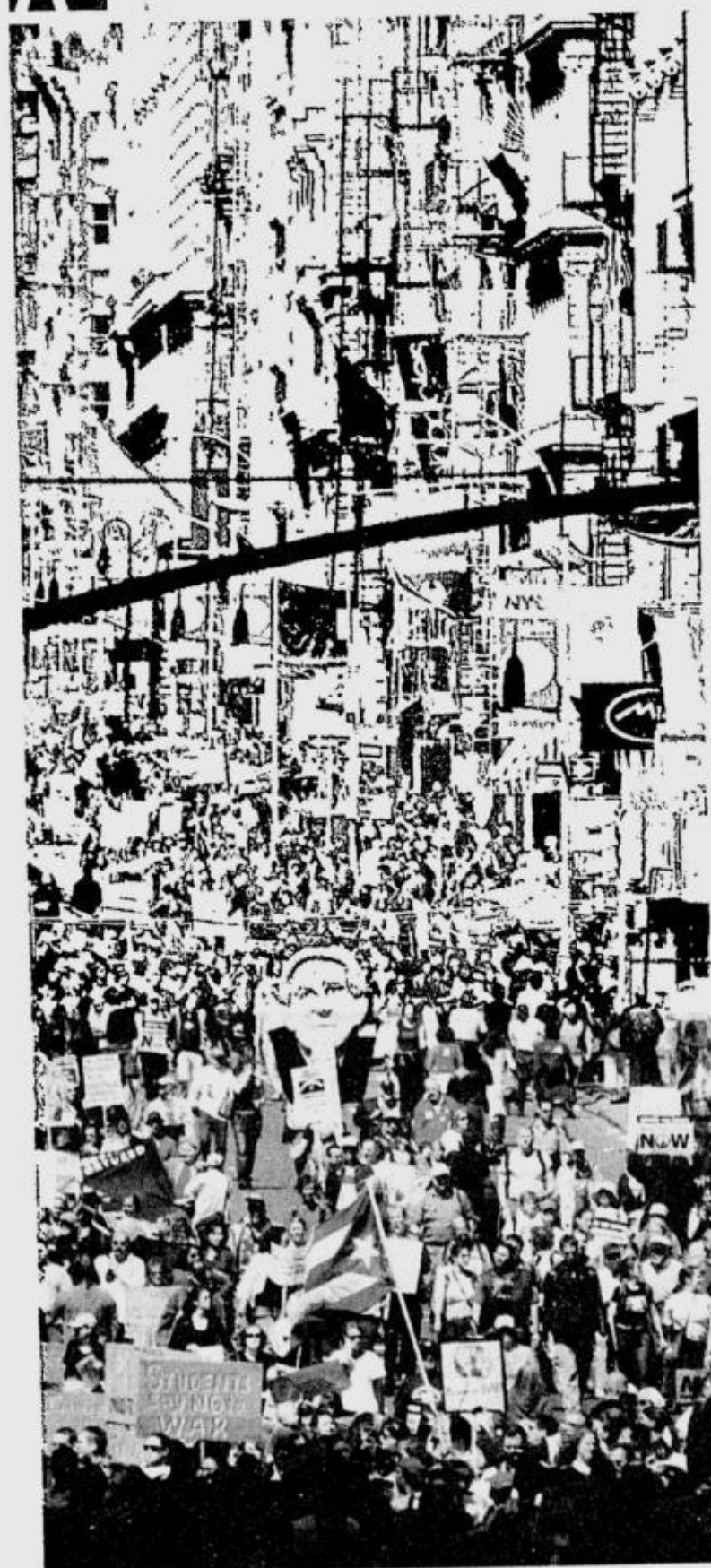
But the reports' main finding is that lax oversight by the Army Corps is responsible above all for the failure of the overall program. Cowed by security fears that the reports suggest may have been overblown, the corps sometimes inspected the work only through what it called "windshield surveys"—hasty drive-bys in which little but the existence of a standing structure could be noted.

Whatever the causes, the impact of the failure on the American effort to rebuild Iraq is enormous, said the inspector general, Stuart W. Bowen Jr.

"This was the most important program in the health sector," Bowen said in an interview. "It sought to fulfill a strategy to get health services to rural and remote poor in Iraq."

But the criticisms in the reports have created deep disagreements between Bowen's office and the gulf region division of the Army Corps, which is responsible for the program. In a series of objections that are included in the reports, the division's commander, Brig. Gen. William H. McCoy Jr., rejects many of the findings and attempts to shift much of the blame to the American and Iraqi contractors who carried out the work.

"Contractor performance and lack of openness in addressing schedule and budget issues in a timely fashion obscured the severity of the financial problem," McCoy wrote as part of his response. **NYT**



PROTESTERS march down Broadway in New York City during a mass rally against the war in Iraq, April 29. **AP**

'Day Without Immigrants' as Hispanics stress a point

LOS ANGELES—IN A DRAMATIC bid to make their presence and their contributions felt, immigrants in the United States are making a conscious effort to be noticeably absent.

Hispanic groups are urging them to take part in a "Day Without Immigrants" on Monday by staying home from work and school and avoiding shopping trips, in an effort to press officials to legalize the status of the 12 million illegal immigrants living in the United States.

"We have to make our presence felt through our absence," organizers from the nation's most influential Hispanic groups said Friday at their final press conference before the mass boycott.

Though Monday is a normal work day in the United States—where Labor Day is celebrated in September instead of May 1, as in many countries—it might look more like a May Day abroad, complete with demonstrations called by workers' unions and rights advocates.

But while the demonstration was planned by a network of organizations representing the largest US minority group, some 40 million Hispanics, the coalition called for solidarity among all US immigrant communities, encouraging them to show a united front in boycotting work and commercial transactions for a day so their full economic weight could be felt.

"We've unequivocally called on all families to participate in the Great American Boycott and the marches—and that translates into not going to work, not going to school, not shopping and not selling," Nativio Lopez, president of the Mexican

American Political Association, said at Friday's press conference.

However, city and school officials and the "We Are America" coalition—which includes the Roman Catholic Church—are encouraging people to go to school and work and join the demonstrations later in the day.

The division over the way the protests should be carried out is as evident among political leaders as it is among unions.

President George W. Bush criticized the boycott and a measure to have a Spanish version of the US national anthem, urging immigrants instead to learn English so they can sing the original version of the song.

California's Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger also denounced Monday's boycott, but the state's Democrat-dominated Senate approved a resolution supporting it.

Meanwhile, food giants such as Tyson Food Inc. and Cargill Foods announced the closing of at least eight plants, while Goya Foods announced a complete halt in its daily distribution. All three companies said they understood the sentiments behind the protest.

"It's no surprise that food companies are taking a position favoring workers, given that many of them employ immigrants, most of them Hispanic and many of them illegal," Angel Luevano, spokesperson for the League of United Latin American Citizens, told **AFP**.

Wal-Mart, which employs more than 1.3 million people, has not yet announced what it will do if a sizable number of its Hispanic employees take the day off. **AFP**

'Corridor of death' leads to a grasp of the US dream

SASABE, MEXICO—THEY CALL IT the "corridor of death." At one end is poverty. At the other the American dream. And in between there are drug gangs, killer temperatures for a three-day walk across the desert and hostile border guards.

But each day, hundreds of people arrive in Sasabe from across Mexico and Central America, hoping to reach the United States and in many cases ready to carry a backpack full of marijuana with them.

Clandestine immigration and drug trafficking plays a major economic role in the towns of Sasabe and Altar in Sonora state, on the Mexico-US border.

The US nongovernmental group, Humane Borders, estimates that the Sasabe valley is the main point for illegal entry along the 3,000 kilometer US-Mexico border, because the Arizona desert is the least patrolled border sector.

But crossing the border involves a three-day walk, with summer temperatures soaring past 50 degrees Celsius and the trekkers risk dehydration. Border patrols are also waiting.

Shops in Sasabe sell creams for muscle pains, special jackets, flashlights for nighttime walking, and black paint to mask out anything that might shine and give away the would-be illegal migrants.

Across the border, the waves of illegal immigrants have sparked a fierce political debate that has divided US President George W. Bush's ruling Republican Party.



A Hispanic farmworker harvest Ranunculus bulbs at the Flower Fields April 28 in Carlsbad, California. **AFP**

There are an estimated 11.5 million undocumented workers in the United States and hundreds of thousands have taken part in demonstrations against one bill that has passed through the House of Representatives

and would make illegal entry a crime.

Bush is pressing what he calls a more humane plan to toughen border controls while setting up a "guest" worker plan that would allow but illegals to hope for US na-

tionality. The Mexican authorities are also unable to cope with the march to the frontier.

"You need the federal police here. They are too few for the number of migrants and the amount of drugs," said a member of Beta, a group created by the Mexican government to aid migrants.

Altar, 100 kilometers west of Sasabe, is dubbed the "ante room" of illegal immigration, explained Prisciliano Peraza, a priest, who calculated that there was a "floating population" of about 7,000 would-be migrants.

Sasabe, with some 3,000 permanent residents, resembles a shantytown lost in the middle of the desert. The migrants often take shelter in wooden shacks and tents while they wait their chance.

Drug gangs lurk seeking to recruit human "mules" to carry consignments across the border.

"Groups of 15 'mules' from the Sasabe zone cross the frontier, each with 20 kilograms of marijuana on their backs," said Jose Antonio Rivera, of the Commission to Aid Migrants in Sonora.

"Young people are recruited here, in the cities and villages of Sonora. They deposit the cargo in the US, then they hand themselves in to the US Border Patrol, which takes them back to Mexico."

"They earn \$1,000-\$1,500 for each trip," he said.

Mexican authorities say they are overwhelmed by the smugglers. According to aid groups, more than 3,000 people cross the border each day. **AFP**

Withering village of a graying Japan writes its epitaph

By Norimitsu Onishi

OGAMA, JAPAN—THIS MOUNTAIN village near the Sea of Japan, withered to eight aging residents, concluded recently that it could no longer go on.

So, after months of anguish, the villagers settled on a drastic solution: selling all of Ogama to an industrial waste company from Tokyo, which will turn it into a landfill.

With the proceeds, the villagers, mainly in their 70s, plan to pack up everything, including their family graves, and

move in the next few years to yet uncertain destinations, likely becoming the first community in Japan to voluntarily cease to exist.

"I'm sure we're the first ones to have made such a proposal," said Kazuo Miyasaka, 64, the village leader. "It's because there's no future for us here, zero."

On a hill overlooking a field of overgrown bushes, surrounded by the sounds of a stream and a bush warbler, Miyasaka pointed below with his right index finger. "I never imagined it

would come to this," he said. "I mean, those all used to be rice fields."

Ogama's decision, though extreme, points to a larger problem besetting Japan, which has one of the world's fastest-graying societies and whose population began declining last year for the first time in its history. As rural Japan becomes increasingly depopulated, many villages and hamlets like Ogama, along with their traditions and histories, risk vanishing.

Japan is dotted with so many such communities that academics

have coined a term—"villages that have reached their limits"—to describe those with populations that are more than half elderly. Out of 140 villages in Monzen—the municipality that includes Ogama—40 percent have fewer than 10 households, most of which are inhabited by the elderly.

Rural Japan has never recovered from the long economic recession, unlike the cities.

So desperate are some rural communities that they fiercely compete for businesses that would have drawn protests in

more prosperous times.

As part of his efforts to decentralize government during his five years in office, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi increased the strain on localities by reducing public works spending that yielded money and jobs for local construction companies.

Koizumi also cut subsidies and tax redistribution to local governments, instead giving them the power to collect taxes directly. But rural officials contend that with a decreasing population and few businesses, there are few taxes to collect.

In keeping with a nationwide movement to combine financially squeezed municipalities, Monzen merged with nearby Wajima City in February. In 2000, revenues from the national government to the two municipalities totaled \$114 million, accounting for 50 percent of their overall revenues; in 2005, money from the capital fell to \$90 million, or to 44 percent of their revenues.

Fumiaki Kaji, the mayor of the merged municipality, said recent changes amounted to a "simple logic of telling the countryside that it should die." **NYT**



BLAIR: Snagged in "cash for honors" row.

REUTERS

Blair ratings at record low as Labor seen as 'sleazy, incompetent'

LONDON—BRITISH PRIME MINISTER TONY Blair's ratings have sunk to an all-time low as most Britons see his Labor Party as "sleazy and incompetent," a survey showed at the week-end.

The poll published in The Sunday Times newspaper comes after political and personal crises erupted last Wednesday around three key ministers in Blair's Cabinet ahead of testing local elections in the coming week.

On "Black Wednesday," Blair's deputy John Prescott admitted to having an affair, his home secretary Charles Clarke apologized for failing to deport foreign convicts, and nurses booed his health secretary Patricia Hewitt.

Some 57 percent of people surveyed by YouGov for the Sunday Times since Wednesday said the party was "sleazy and incompetent."

Blair's personal rating has slipped to its lowest level since he took over as the party leader in 1994, with 64 percent saying he was doing badly and just 33 percent thinking that he was doing well.

Of those surveyed, 48 percent now want Prescott sacked, including nearly a quarter of Labor supporters. Only 31 percent think he should stay on the job.

Opinions of his political abilities were low, as 52 percent agreed with the statement that

he was "a buffoon who should never have made it to high office."

Just 9 percent thought he had done a good job as deputy prime minister.

Some 53 percent want Clarke to get the axe and 21 percent want him to stay.

A huge majority of 89 percent said the mistaken foreign prisoner releases showed "alarming incompetence," with 72 percent rating the government's overall performance on crime and immigration "generally incompetent."

Some 51 percent of the voters want Hewitt to resign, while only 19 percent want her to stay.

Those surveyed widely distrusted Hewitt's claim that the National Health Service had its best ever year. Some 72 percent said her contention was wrong and only 7 percent thought it was right.

Sixty-two percent believe the NHS is doing badly, while 30 percent think it is doing well.

The poll also revealed signs that smaller parties may do well in Thursday's election.

All three main parties' ratings are down on the last poll in March, with Labor and the Conservatives each dropping three points to 32 percent and 35 percent respectively, and the Liberal Democrats down one at 18 percent.

Overall support for other parties was up from 8 percent to 15 percent. **AFP**

MILESTONES

Economist John Kenneth Galbraith; 97

WASHINGTON — JOHN Kenneth Galbraith, an influential liberal economist and author of "The Affluent Society," has died at age 97, The New York Times reported on Sunday.

The Canadian-born Galbraith, a professor at Harvard University, died on Saturday at a hospital in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the paper said.

Galbraith's most famous work, 1958's "The Affluent Society," became a best-seller. In the book, he argued that the United States had become rich in consumer goods but poor in social services.



GALBRAITH

REUTERS

Galbraith tutored Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic nominee for president in 1952 and 1956, on economics. He also advised President John F. Kennedy and served as his ambassador to India.

Though he eventually broke with President Lyndon Johnson over the war in Vietnam, he helped conceive of Johnson's Great Society program and wrote a major presidential address that outlined its purposes, the Times said.

At his death Galbraith was an emeritus professor of economics at Harvard, where he had taught for most of his career. **Reuters**

Indonesia author Pramoedya; 81

JAKARTA — INDONESIA'S best-known author and perennial Nobel candidate Pramoedya Ananta Toer died on Sunday, the family said.

Pramoedya, known for his anti-colonial novels and long history of persecution by past regimes, had been suffering respiratory problems and chest pains in recent days and had refused to eat, national news agency Antara reported.

Antara called him "one of Indonesia's great literary men."

He died at his daughter's home in East Jakarta, one of his grandsons told Reuters. He was 81.

Born in Central Java in 1925, Pramoedya spent 14 years living on a desolate prison island called Buru under former autocrat Suharto because of his perceived links with communism.

While on the swampy, malaria-ridden island, Pramoedya conceived his best-known quartet of novels, the Buru series, tracing the early independence movement against the Dutch.

He published the series after his release in 1979.

His books—he wrote some 30 in all—have been translated into nearly 40 languages.

Pramoedya was denied pens or pencils dur-



PRAMOEDYA

AP

ing much of his term on Buru. But he once told Reuters he had recited the stories so often to fellow prisoners all he had to do after his release was put pen to paper and the words flowed.

His hearing was permanently damaged during an assault by a soldier while in prison. But it was the burning of his manuscripts and books by the authorities in the mid-1960s that left the deepest scar.

"After 1965, all the contents of my personal library were burnt to the ground, my house was confiscated," Pramoedya once said, referring to the year when a coup attempt blamed on communists sparked massive bloodshed that claimed hundreds of thousands of lives.

Pramoedya's links with the Communist-affiliated People's Culture Institute led to his imprisonment on Buru. After his release, he was put under house arrest and barred from travelling for many years.

Though born and raised on Indonesia's main island Java, he had few of its traits emphasizing humility and indirectness.

Quoted by Antara at a birthday party when he turned 80, Pramoedya blasted Indonesia as a "continent of corruption." **Reuters**

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Berlusconi to quit as PM

Resignation to end wrangling over poll defeat

ROME—ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER SILVIO Berlusconi said on Saturday he would resign, ending three weeks of wrangling over a narrow election defeat and clearing the political decks for Romano Prodi to take power.

Berlusconi, who had previously alleged election fraud and refused to formally concede defeat after April 9-10 polls, would hand his resignation to President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi on Tuesday after a scheduled Cabinet meeting, officials said.

Prodi's center-left coalition, ranging from communists to centrist Roman Catholics, won the election by the smallest margin in modern Italian history and will have to find quick remedies for a struggling economy and way-

ward public finances.

Many political commentators are skeptical he will govern for long, especially after his coalition displayed embarrassing disunity on Friday and Saturday, needing four votes to get its candidate elected president of parliament's upper house Senate.

"The Prodi government, if it ever sees the light of day, will have to get used to living with an abacus in its hands," the leftist La Repubblica newspaper said after the coalition failed to unite round Franco Marini

in the first three votes.

The center-left has only a two-seat majority in the Senate but should be able to count on support from several life-senators appointed by the president, not elected. Prodi's majority is bigger in the lower house Chamber of Deputies.

"Yes," an official at Berlusconi's office said when asked whether the prime minister, Italy's richest man and a media magnate, had decided to quit after leading Italy for five years with a center-right Cabinet.

Berlusconi won power in 2001 promising an economic miracle of tax cuts, an infrastructure boom and economic growth of around 4 percent per year. But in 2005 the economy failed to grow for the second time in three years.

The public deficit has exceeded

the European Union's 3 percent of GDP ceiling for the last three years, with the trend worsening as one-off deficit plugs have run out. The 2005 deficit of 4.1 percent of GDP was the highest since 1996.

Prodi, a former European Commission president, has made much of his five years in Brussels where he stood on a world stage and earned a reputation for seriousness—a campaign motto he coined to contrast with Berlusconi's flamboyance.

He saw EU expansion and the introduction of the euro to fruition, but had only limited success in his attempts to stamp out waste and fraud. He left many cold with his lack of communication skills and presence. *Reuters*



BERLUSCONI clears the decks for Prodi.

REUTERS

Iran crisis: Neither side blinks, but Tehran offers concession

CAIRO, EGYPT—THE UN DEADLINE for Iran to stop uranium enrichment came and went, and nobody blinked.

Throughout the spiraling conflict—slathered in tough talk on all sides—Iran had said it would not bow to international pressure, apparently banking on the deep split in the Security Council over the "or else" portion of the United Nations' demand.

Russia and China did not budge from their opposition to UN sanctions as punishment, leaving the United States, Britain and France hamstrung and facing a possible Security Council veto by the Kremlin and Beijing.

Iran, however, appeared to have understood it may have pushed the international community as hard as it could for the time being.

On Saturday, the Islamic republic issued a concessionary proposal that might offer a way out of the dangerous stalemate, which US President George W. Bush has said caused the United States to leave

the military option on the table.

"If the issue is returned to the International Atomic Energy Agency, we will be ready to allow intrusive inspections," Iran's deputy nuclear chief, Mohammed Saeedi, told state-run television.

His words appeared to anticipate an international loss of patience voiced Saturday by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov—a steadfast opponent of sanctions.

Lavrov told his Iranian counterpart Manouchehr Mottaki by telephone that Iran must halt uranium enrichment and cooperate with the IAEA.

According to a Foreign Ministry statement, Lavrov demanded that Iran suspend research and development on enrichment and "provide full-format cooperation" with the IAEA to "clear up the IAEA's remaining questions."

In February, Iran barred intrusive inspections of its nuclear facilities by the IAEA, the UN watchdog for compliance with the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, after it was referred to the Security Coun-

cil over its nuclear activities.

Several Western countries—the United States, Britain and France, in particular—suspect the program is aimed at producing nuclear warheads.

By offering a return of so-called snap inspections, Iran appeared to be giving ground in an attempt to convince the IAEA—and the world community—that it was telling the truth when it said it was enriching uranium only as fuel for reactors to generate electricity.

"What is up for negotiation is to remove concerns of probably few countries in negotiations," Saeedi told Iranian television in a direct reference to Western allegations.

The White House was dismissive of the Iranian offer.

"Today's statement does not change our position that the Iranian government must give up its nuclear ambitions, nor does it affect our decision to move forward to the United Nations Security Council," spokesperson Blaine Rethmeier said Saturday. *AP*

Almost half of Japanese fear possibility of war

TOKYO—ALMOST HALF OF JAPANESE FEAR the country could face war again, with North Korea's nuclear program and China's massive military buildup considered major threats to peace, according to a government survey published Sunday.

The Cabinet Office survey, published in all major Japanese newspapers Sunday, said 45 percent of respondents believe Japan may become caught up in a war—up 1.8 percentage points from a 2003 survey—while only 16.5 percent disagreed.

The survey said that 63.7 percent of respondents cited North Korea's nuclear threat as a possible cause of regional conflict, followed by terrorist attacks and the rapid modernization of China's military.

Japan's relations with China have deteriorated in recent months due to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visits to a Tokyo war shrine that defends Japan's militaristic past, as well as disputes over Japanese history textbooks and territorial issues. Tokyo has repeatedly voiced concern about China's rising military spending, which it sees as a threat to regional stability. *AP*



AT THE CENTER OF OUTING SCANDAL
Former CIA agent Valerie Plame attends the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner in Washington April 29. This is Plame's first public appearance since her identity was leaked to the media, which is under federal investigation. *REUTERS*



RAELIAN MARCH

Members of the Raelian Movement march during a rally assailing violence on the streets in Seoul, South Korea, Sunday. About 30 members of the religious group, which believes that extraterrestrials created life on Earth through genetic engineering, participated in this event. The signs read "No violence." *AP*

Taliban behead Indian hostage

KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN—POLICE in Afghanistan on Sunday found the body of an Indian engineer kidnapped two days before by Taliban militants, a killing that earned swift condemnation from New Delhi.

A Taliban spokesperson, Yousuf Ahmadi, told AFP the killing of Surya Narayan, who was working as a contractor for Afghan mobile telephone network Roshan, was unintentional, but officials said the killing was no accident.

Narayan's body was found in Shahjoi district of restive Zabul province in southern Afghanistan, district police chief Mohammed Mir told AFP.

"His body was found beheaded in an area called Hassan Karez, so it cannot be an accident as the Taliban claim," an interior ministry official said on condition of anonymity.

Narayan was abducted Friday in Zabul province, along the main highway linking the capital Kabul to the southern city of Kandahar, birthplace of the Taliban movement.

On Saturday, the militants threatened to kill Narayan unless



K. MANJULA, wife of K. Suryanarayana, holds her husband's portrait and cries in Hyderabad, India, Saturday, April 29. *AP*

all Indian nationals and companies left Afghanistan within 24 hours.

"The Indian engineer was in a room with one guard, he attacked the guard and punched him, went out of the building running as other mujahedin shot him dead," Ahmadi told AFP by telephone.

Ahmadi said the Taliban's council of leaders was "saddened" by the incident, as New Delhi had shown its willingness to negotiate for Narayan's release.

"We are sorry—the leading council had decided to extend the deadline for another 24 hours since the Indian side had showed gestures that they were ready to negotiate," he said.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh condemned what he called the "inhuman" killing of Narayan, who hailed from the southern Indian city of Hyderabad and was a father of three.

Afghan interior ministry spokesperson Mohammed Yousuf Stanizai could not immediately confirm the police findings.

Indian satellite channel CNN-IBN showed footage of Narayan's family in severe shock in Hyderabad after receiving news that he had been killed.

His wife Manjula and three children were crying inconsolably, surrounded by family members who were trying to comfort them. *AFP*

Bush, look-alike tickle reporters at White House dinner

WASHINGTON—IT WAS TWICE the fun for members of the White House Correspondents' Association and guests when President George W. Bush and a look-alike, sound-alike sidekick poked fun at the president and fellow politicians.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I feel chipper tonight. I survived the White House shake-up," the president said Saturday night.

But impersonator Steve Bridges stole many of the best lines. Vice President Dick Cheney and his hunting accident were targets of his humor on a couple of occasions.

"Speaking of suspects, where is the great white hunter?" Bridges

said, later adding, "He shot the only trial lawyer in the country who supports me."

Bush continued a tradition begun by President Coolidge in attending the correspondents' dinner.

He invited Bridges to play his double. The president talked to the press in polite, friendly terms. Bridges told them what the president was really thinking.

Bridges opened like this: "The media really tick me off—the way they try to embarrass me by not editing what I say. Well let's things going, or I'll never get to bed."

"I'm absolutely delighted to be here, as is (wife) Laura," Bush replied.

"She's hot," Bridges quipped.

The featured entertainer was Stephen Colbert, whose Comedy Central show "The Colbert Report" often lampoons the Washington establishment.

"I believe that the government that governs best is a government that governs least, and by these standards we have set up a fabulous government in Iraq," Colbert said in a typical zinger.

He also paid mock tribute to Bush as a man who "believes Wednesday what he believed Monday, despite what happened Tuesday."

Yet it's the Who's Who of power and celebrity in the audience—invited by media organizations to

their dinner tables—that draws much of the attention.

Joining ABC were former Ambassador Joseph Wilson and his wife, Valerie Plame, the CIA officer at the heart of a leak investigation that has reached deep into the White House.

Others on the guest list included rapper-actor Ludacris, whose real name is Chris Bridges; James Denton, the hunky plumber on "Desperate Housewives" on ABC; "Dancing With the Stars" winner Drew Lachey; New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin; tennis player Anna Kournikova; and Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger. *AP*



PRESIDENT Bush (right) and Steve Bridges, a comedian and President Bush impersonator. *AP*

SPORTS

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Portmasters halt Painters by 3



HARBOUR Centre's Joseph Yeo finds the going tough and ends up with just 4 points.

Toyota Otis raps Hapee-PCU five

By Jasmine W. Payo

BACKUP POINT GUARD CHICO Lanete drained a three-pointer with 40.3 seconds left as Harbour Centre stunned league-leader Rain or Shine, 59-56, in the PBL Unity Cup yesterday at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

GAMES TOMORROW
(San Andres Gym)
2 p.m.—Granny Goose vs TeleTech
4 p.m.—Montana vs Magnolia

The Portmasters scored their first franchise-win over the seasoned Elasto Painters despite the absence of team star Joseph Yeo, who was ejected with 2:28 minutes left in the third period for hitting

Gilbert Malabanan.

"Finally after six tries, Harbour Centre won versus Rain or Shine," said coach Jorge Gallent. "Lanete won it for us despite a sprained ankle."

Reyes finished with 11 points and six rebounds, while LA Tenorio delivered another all-around performance with 11 markers, 11 assists, four rebounds and two steals.

In the second game, Toyota Otis regained control in the fourth quarter to post a 69-59 victory over Hapee-PCU.

The Sparks tied Rain or Shine for second place at 7-3, behind Montana Pawnshop (7-2). Harbour Centre picked up its second straight win for a 4-6 slate, while Hapee-PCU dropped to 3-7.

Despite Yeo's ejection, the Portmasters stubbornly held on to the lead until Marvin Ortiguerra and Jay-R Reyes teamed up to trim the deficit to a point, 54-53.

An Ortiguerra triple finally pushed the Painters on top for the first time, 56-54 with 1:42 left.

But Lanete responded with a clutch triple to push the Portmasters ahead, 57-56, with only 40.3 ticks left. Tenorio then nailed only one of his three free throws for 58-56, giving the Painters a chance to turn the game around.

But the Painters missed their last three attempts, including Eugene Tan's potential winning triple in the dying seconds.

The scores:

First Game

HARBOUR CENTRE 59—Reyes 11, Tenorio 11, Alonzo 8, Lanete 8, Dy 5, Gaco 4, Malerholer 4, Yeo 4, Gamboa 2, Arana 2, Coaching 0.

RAIN OR SHINE 56—Ortiguerra 15, Reyes 10, Enrile 9, Malabanan 7, Tangkay 7, Sla. Maria 4, Tan 3, Cabatu 1, Orbeta 0, Sagad 0, Eman 0.

Quarters: 16-10, 27-19, 42-39, 59-56

Second Game

TOYOTA OTIS 69—Rodriguez 10, Aldave 9, Casio 9, Coronel 8, Oreta 7, Devance 7, Bautista 5, Daa 4, Alcaraz 4, Fajardo 4, Baluyot 2, Larong 0, Cabahug 0.

HAPEE-PCU 59—Sanz 23, Solis 10, Espinas 8, Castro 5, Annaparado 4, Garrido 2, Moren0 2, Bucaco 0, Guevarra 0, Gonzales 0, Razon 0, Baculi 0.

Quarters: 17-15, 36-26, 48-41, 69-59

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BAD BOY TOUR

Rodman & Co. test PBA stars today

By Francis Ochoa

THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH THAT ONCE-A-WEEK PRACTICES CAN do for Chot Reyes as far as finding out how far his basketball program has gone. Anytime he can get a game in for his match-hungry national squad, he considers it a blessing.

"We've been waiting in the sidelines for so long just to get a chance to play and we're pretty much excited that we have a great opportunity for us," said the national coach and basketball overlord of a group that's trying to wrest control of the sport's national federation.

That group, Pilipinas Basketball, finally gets the chance to play when it faces an assembly of American players at 5:30 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum.

Don't be deceived by the fact that half of the US team is known nowadays only for their name than for their game, legends whose collective basketball shelf life is way past its expiry date.

The other half of the US Legends squad is strong enough to give Reyes the shivers.

"You're looking at the wrong side of that team if you think it is weak,"

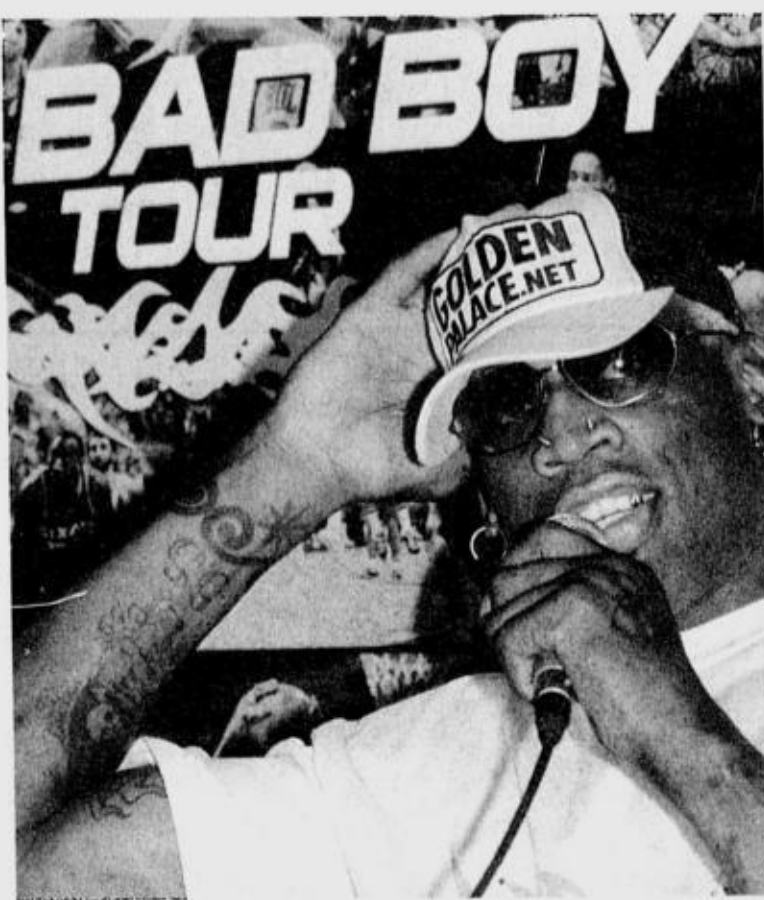
Reyes said.

The other half, composed of unheralded NBA Developmental League (NBDL) players and that one noted NBA name still in good basketball shape, poses a serious threat.

And the 124-94 rout of a San Miguel Corporation touring squad of former pros in Cebu provided but a glimpse of that threat.

"They have a talented and big team," Reyes said. "We didn't see everything that they are capable of doing (in the Mandaue game)."

NBDL standouts Olu Famutini and Myron Allen are expected to lead the charge of the Legends team. And in the middle of that charge is Dennis Rodman, the 6-foot-8 rebounding demon who can change the complexion of a match in many ways—mischief not being the least of them.



REBOUNDING demon Dennis Rodman promises a big game.

Known for his eccentricity and naughty on-court behavior, Rodman showed he is still a force to contend with, hauling down 18 boards in Cebu.

Alex English, Calvin Murphy and Darryl Dawkins will lead the squad's legends half. Dawkins which he will christen.

"Calvin has been very excited to play against the RP Team," said Mario Whitmire, president of the organizing West End Sports.

Whitmire also announced that ticket prices for general admission have been reduced to only P150.

Former MVPs Asi Taulava and Willie Miller and Jimmy Alapag of

Talk 'N Text will lead the RP Team, which will also have Air21 gun-slinger Ren-Ren Ritualo and Alas-ka's Nic Belasco and Mike Cortez.

"There's not much big names here, these are the guys who are always present during practices and really dedicated to represent the country," Reyes said of his squad.

By the end of the match, Reyes hopes to get an idea of how far his team has gone and how much ground it needs to cover just in case it gets the thumbs-up to represent the country in the 2006 Asian Games in Doha, Qatar.

"We know we have developed already a sense of togetherness," Reyes said.

Bobby Pacquiao signs up with Top Rank

BOBBY PACQUIAO, YOUNGER BROTHER of ring icon Manny, recently signed an exclusive contract with the Las Vegas-based Top Rank promotions.

Terms of the deal, other than it calls for a nine-fight stint for the Filipino pug, were not disclosed.

Bobby signed the agreement together with his management team made up of Cebu-based promoter Wakee Salud and American manager Michael Koncz.

"I am very happy and I feel great in signing with Top Rank," Bobby said in

Filipino. "This is a great opportunity for me to show the world that there is another boxer named Pacquiao who can fight and is worth watching."

Bobby's first fight will be on June 10, when he defends his WBC Continental Americas title against Kevin Kelley in the undercard of the Miguel Cotto vs. Paulie Malignaggi pay-per-view match at Madison Square Garden in New York.

Manny, meanwhile, expressed gratitude to Top Rank, which has handled his last three fights.

"I have personally dealt with Top Rank, they have treated me well and with great respect," Manny, who is preparing for a July 2 bout with Mexican Oscar Larios in Manila, said.

Koncz is credited for reviving the career of Bobby, who was knocked out in the 7th round by Rakkiatgym in a February 2005 fight.

Koncz said that the deal with Top Rank was a bonus for the victory of Bobby Pacquiao over Carlos Hernandez last year. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*



BOBBY Pacquiao

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Pacquiao fight tickets free, Wowwowe!

MANNY PACQUIAO HAS BEEN behaving confused. If not, why was he worried sick about his forthcoming big fight at the Araneta Coliseum?

There's a tested product: Pacquiao himself, the single most saleable commodity in the Philippines, the strongest one-man sales force in the country today.

Pacman could go sell the Jones Bridge to City Hall and the prospective buyers would most probably bite.

But our man of the hour had suddenly sounded unsure of himself.

It was totally unexpected, but Pacquiao angrily protested after it was noted that Oscar Larios, the boxer he'll be fighting on July 2, could be no better than recycled Mexican meat.

"Sorry, Kuyang, but we can't blame Manny, he's the hands-on promoter of his fight against Larios, *baka nagkasunod-sunod lang*," explained Peter Musngi, ABS-CBN's tested impresario.

By "nagkasunod-sunod," our friendly ABS-CBN exec meant the succeeding reports in this column which stated, among others, that: 1) Larios suffered a silly knockdown against an obscure Japanese pug in Tokyo last year; 2) Larios was beaten silly by Israel Vasquez, a Pacquiao sparmate, in their last clash for the world 122-pound crown.

Also, the subsequent question on why Larios was allotted a whopping \$450,000 purse, more expensive than a world champion, had not been answered.

Again, that itself should not be cause for worry among handlers of the July 2 super bout at Araneta Coliseum.

Of course, some clarifications would've helped.

But the good news for Manny Pacquiao Promotions is that the *masa*, the wet-market crowds in particular, has been properly incensed, excited, won over, captivated by the Pacquiao-Larios *mano-a-mano*.

Talo ba tayong? (Are we losing?) asked a pudgy, sunburnt *bibingka* vendor at the Mandaluyong public market yesterday.

The poor fellow, a billiards parlor habitue, was alarmed by claims stating Larios was a lot better than Marco Antonio Barrera and Erik Morales, or both of the two Mexican ring greats combined.

These details about the alleged greatness of Larios were drumbeated during the over-decorated ABS-CBN presscon on Friday, an affair that showed the giant television network is throwing everything behind the super fight.

A big hand to the promoters. The selling of Larios had been colorfully handled, Peter Musngi must be believed

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad



when he said that, just like Pacquiao, ABS-CBN throws everything into any major project.

Truth is the Pacquiao bout has been sold out this early. Or before his opponent could be named, for that matter.

As the sharp street pollster puts it, Pacquiao would fill the Big Dome even if he boxes a chimp ("*Maski tsonggo kontra Pacquiao, papanoorin 'yan*").

In fact, ABS-CBN needed not have created a big problem by offering to give away all general admission tickets.

The best they could have done was sell these at prices well within reach of the poor, hungry *masa* that, no thanks to crippling poverty, could no longer afford anything hereabouts.

ABS-CBN, mainly big boss Gabby Lopez, definitely meant well, but it's missing the main point.

You bet our poor brothers in the slums would beg and borrow just to be able to watch their super hero fight live and, wow, against a Mexican at that.

Now that the lowest priced passes would no longer be offered at the ticket booths, how do our very poor neighbors get hold of a ticket to the Pacquiao fight?

Risk their lives in another stampede?

Pardon this, but ABS-CBN has indulged in shallow sweet charity, that is expected to complicate matters.

Of course, the problem is not with the poor general admission crowds alone, which form the biggest bulk of fanatics who are still intoxicated with Pacquiao's sensational triumph in Las Vegas last January.

Ticket prices should be within sane reach of everybody, including members of the middle class and the affluent status gods of suburbia.

OK, poor fans need not worry. They would get their dream tickets free.

But don't look now. There's this suggestion that tickets to the Pacquiao bout be raffled off to the public at the Wow Wow Wee program, featuring the unsinkable Willy Revillame.

Explains Mr. Musngi: "Mechanics are still in the works for different ABS-CBN platforms including TV, Radio, Cable, Interactive and Publishing."

Consult the Palace chief of staff and other crowd control geniuses at Malacañang, please.

Katigbak-Sangil tops Liberica Inv't'l golf

LIPA CITY—GERALD KATIGBAK and Raymund Sangil scored a two-under-par 286 over the weekend to win overall team low gross honors in the eighth Liberica Invitational golf championships of the Mount Malarayat Club here.

Boosted by the long-hitting Sangil's five-under-par 67 on Friday at the Mounts Malipuno and Makulot nines, the team pulled away from the field and turned its championship round on Saturday a mere cakewalk.

Tino Gonzales-Severino Oliva tallied a net 265 for the overall net title, while the Virginia Bote-Josei Untal combine signed for 171 points for the overall team championship.

Sungbin Yoon-Gary Sales totaled 164 points to win the Division 1 diadem by 10 points over the Mark Mendoza-Eddie Bagtas Jr. team.

Ricky Velasco, the chairman of the tournament, and guest Errol Cruz submitted 152 points for third place.

Ray Brion and Jovey Eala amassed 160 points for the Division 2 crown, two ahead of Ding Andal-Joey Magcalayo, who finished with 158 points and nipped the Jess Bartolome-Gerry Jaspio tandem via the countback.

Francisco Wong-Norberto Tolentino ran away with the Division 3 crown after shooting a combined 163 points under the Stableford method of scoring. Malarayat chair Antonio Turalba and Cesar Muñoz finished second 12 points behind.

Cruz's gross 82 and net 71 gave him the Sponsors' Category title, with Emil Alviar finishing second with a 72. Herman Hiranng finished third and Francis Laurel fourth after losing in the countback to Alviar.

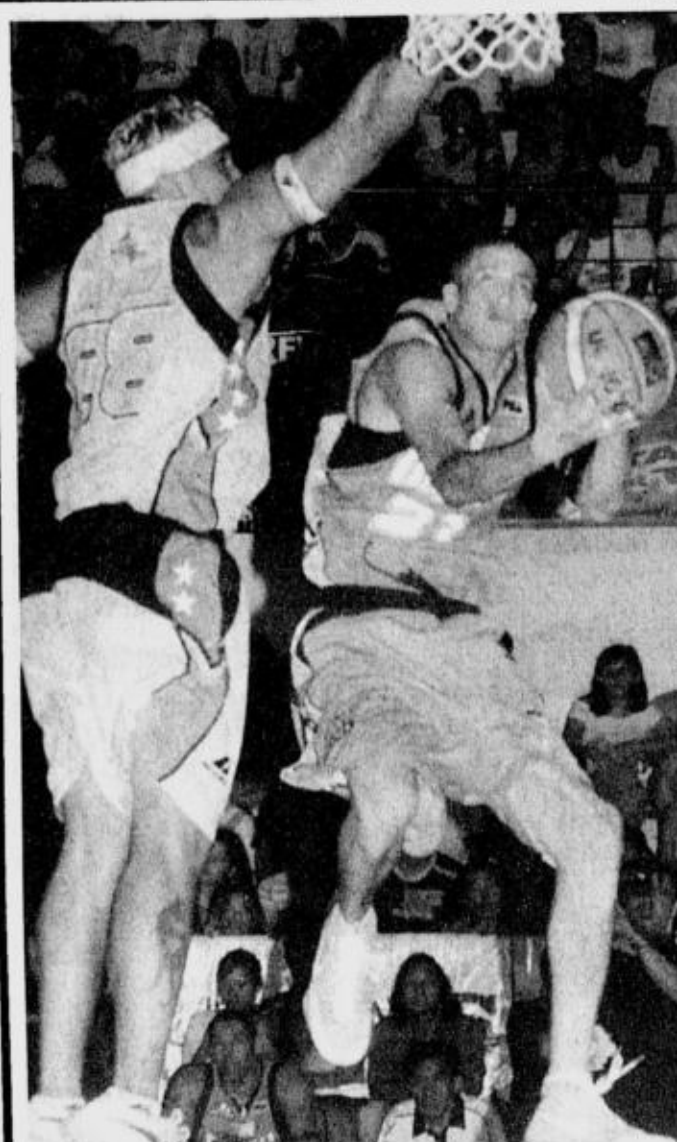
JVC reg'l gets going in Davao

OVER 300 PLAYERS from various provinces in Mindanao buckle down to work today as they begin their chase for top honors in the Davao leg of the JVC Regional Badminton Championships at the Wheels 'N More Badminton Club in Davao City. Events on tap are the elite and juniors divisions with the winners to receive P5,000 and P3,000, respectively, plus medals and gift items. The intercollegiate champions will bring home P8,000 plus gift prizes. A spirited battle in all categories is expected since the top finishers will gain berths to the JVC Open Championships slated in July at Glorietta.

By Jong Arcano

Government Warning: Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health

* Prices may vary from actual unit.
 For DOD/DAF No. 0118 Series of 2006
 See DOD/DAF No. 0118 Series of 2006



JOHN ARIGO (right) goes up against All-Star MVP Asi Taulava. ERIK ARAZAS

PBA stars make the people who matter smile

By Francis Ochoa

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—LONG ADORED BY their legions of fans nationwide, the brightest stars of the Philippine Basketball Association gave a little something back to the real people who prop up their careers.

They gave them the 2006 Hope PBA All-Star Weekend.

From repeat slam dunk winner KG Canaleta putting on a pair of sunglasses and doing an impromptu jig after officials did the math and declared him champion to Jojo Lastimosa carving yet another milestone in a gym where he first honed his basketball skills to Danny Ildefonso and Asi Taulava watching their MVP bids rest in the hands of Roger Yap, fans managed to look past the no-shows and the slip-ups and take home a piece of the PBA with them.

"It's very rare that something as big as this happens here because we are such a small city," said 22-year-old Honey Mei Kho. "And they [PBA stars] even took the time out to visit hospitals and charities and left a lot of Cagayanons very happy."

"The one thing I'll remember most is the slam dunk contest because KG was really, really amazing," she added.

"It was a lot of fun watching Enrico Villanueva play," said Mark Prudente, 25. "I'd been looking forward to this to watch Enrico dunk and play. Plus, the players really wanted to win and they played defense, which is rare in All-Star games. It's really an event to remember."

The South team defeated the North, 122-120, and winning coach Jong Uichico admitted that the players left everything on the court for the



THE HOMETOWN South squad celebrates its 122-120 victory over the North team. In the end, though, the real winners were those who saw their favorite stars in action—the fans. ERIK ARAZAS

people who crammed the Xavier University gym in the two day spectacle.

"This is for the fans," said Uichico. "They were really so involved in the game and that's what fired up the players."

"It didn't matter who won," said Canaleta. "We just wanted to put on a good show for the fans." And it was, indeed a good show.

Canaleta won the slam dunk tilt against a host

of challengers that included ex-champs. Lastimosa, born and raised here, rallied the Legends past the league's current crop of shooters. And the South squad went through uneasy moments before emerging victorious.

In the end, though, the real winners were the people who really mattered the most—those who cheered themselves hoarse, thrilled at the excitement the weekend affair brought to their lives.

Drivers gear up for AF3 kickoff

INSPIRED BY THE SUCCESS OF THEIR recent street drive, Asian Formula Three drivers have started testing in earnest for the opening three rounds of this year's circuit at the Batangas Racing Circuit on May 6-7.

One of them, female driver Gaby dela Merced, took a while adjusting to the power of her AF3 car in her initial test last week but is now raring to go.

"I am more focused on being familiar with the car," said Dela Merced 23, who is making the jump to AF3 from Formula Toyota. The first time I tested I was overwhelmed because the car is really powerful. I was able to feel the force and I got very excited."

"Gaby set a best time of one minute, 36.2 seconds, which is okay for a first timer," said team manager Edgen Dy-Liaco. "We are sure she will be close to the pace by race week."

Dela Merced and the other AF3 bets showed their driving skills before a big crowd in front of the Rajah Sulaiman Park during the Ginebra San Miguel Street Drive on Roxas Boulevard in Manila.

Gaby will race in the Promotions class for Speedtech Asia and has for a teammate Tyson Sy, the first Filipino to score a breakthrough win in last year's series by completing a golden double at the Sentul International Circuit in Indonesia en route to a fourth place finish overall.

Dado Peña, backed by PLDT MyPAD (www.mypad.net), MOF, Hanjin Pena y Cia and Speedzone, is also back with Team Goddard, determined to improve on his sixth place overall finish last year.

The 2003 overall champion, Pepon Marave, will be back at the helm of a Kenetic F3 car. Another Filipino, JP Tuason, will drive for Tuason Racing.



MIKOLA



SY: Top RP bet

They will be up against a host of foreign drivers bidding to take over from where Indonesian Ananda Mikola left off last year. Mikola emerged as the overall champion with a runaway 154 points on four victories in 12 rounds and has since concentrated on the A1 circuit. He will race anew, though, when the AF3 goes to Sentul in August.

"The success of the Ginebra Street Drive has really rubbed off on the drivers," said AF3 Corp. chair Ed Peña. "They are consistent in testing and we expect their times to continue improving over the next few days. We have a great cast that includes top Filipino drivers. We can't wait to see what will happen in the opening three rounds."

Each of the six legs of this year's series, which will also include visits to Zhuhai, China, and Sentul, Indonesia, will consist of three rounds each, putting emphasis on the conditioning of the drivers and the preparation and maintenance of their machines.

The foreign cast is led by John O'Hara of Ireland, second placer last year who is bidding to win the overall title on his third try. He will team up with compatriot Ali Jackson of Aran Racing, an Irish team that made an initial foray into AF3 racing late last year.

Jackson has spent several days testing at

BRC and has recorded a best lap time of 1:28.8 minutes at the 3.4-km circuit.

James Winslow of England, who edged Sy for third overall last year, was only one-tenth of a second slower. He will go into this weekend's races fresh off a win, two second place finishes and a third place finish in the Australian F3 races.

Winslow will team up with fellow Briton Dillon Battistini, a 28-year-old driver who rose through the ranks of British karting. They will drive for JA Motorsports, a new team being managed by Adachi San, the Japanese engineer who helped Mikola clinch last year's title.

Three Indonesian drivers are also in the field, including last year's Promotions class winner, Moreno Soeprapto, half-brother of Mikola. Soeprapto will drive for Speedtech Asia while Bagoes Hermanto and his brother, Satria, will drive for Joson F3.

So draws with GM, keeps IM hopes alive

DUBAI—WESLEY SO KEPT HIS BID FOR AN International Master result alive Saturday, salvaging a draw with Grandmaster Faruk Bistic of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the seventh round of the 8th Dubai Open at the Dubai Chess and Culture Club here.

The 12-year-old So, who last month became the youngest Philippine team member to the World Chess Olympiad, notched his second draw and improved to 4 points for a share of 40th place along with 26 others including Woman GM Maria Sergeeva of Kazakhstan.

Sergeeva will be So's eighth-round opponent.

Third seed Gabriel Sargissian of Armenia stopped overnight solo leader and second seeded Kazakh Darnen Sadvakasov in just 23 moves of a Nimzo-Indian Defense to score 6 points and forge a triple tie for the lead with No. 8 Sergey Fedorchuk of the Ukraine and 11th-ranked Tigran Petrosian, also of Armenia.

Fedorchuk inflicted a second straight loss on fifth seeded Ukrainian Evgenij Miroshnichenko after 55 moves of an English Opening while Petrosian nipped No. 6 Giorgi Kacheishvili of Georgia after 42 moves of a Caro-Kann Defense. Marlon Bernardino, contributor

Enduro SML starts May 27

IT'S ALL SYSTEMS GO FOR THE ENDURO San Mig Light Adventure Series.

After the huge success of the first Enduro series, the adventure race—tagged as one of the biggest sporting events of the year—kicks off its SML 2006 first leg on May 27 in Cebu.

Unlike last year where the racers encountered and survived Cebu City's deep terrains and cliffs, this time the Enduro SML Adventure highlights some of the south's exotic islands and tricky hills.

This year's Cebu leg, however, is open on-

ly for the Novice category.

Although open to hard-core and professional adventure racers, the category is suited best for the weekend warriors, and students.

More than P100,000 in cash prizes are up for grabs along with San Mig Light premium items and trophies at the end of the four-to-six hour quest.

The Enduro SML Adventure Series, sponsored by San Mig Light, has tested the endurance, stamina and skills of participants. For inquiries, call (632) 414-1489 or log on to www.sanmiglight.com.ph.

SAN LAZARO RACES

Million Dollar, Spectacular Play hammer out contrasting triumphs

By Musong R. Castillo

CARMONA, CAVITE—TOP CHOICE Million Dollar set a blistering pace early and then dispatched his pursuers in the stretch yesterday to rule the Capt. Inocencio Crisostomo Cup by four lengths over Dixie The Younger at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

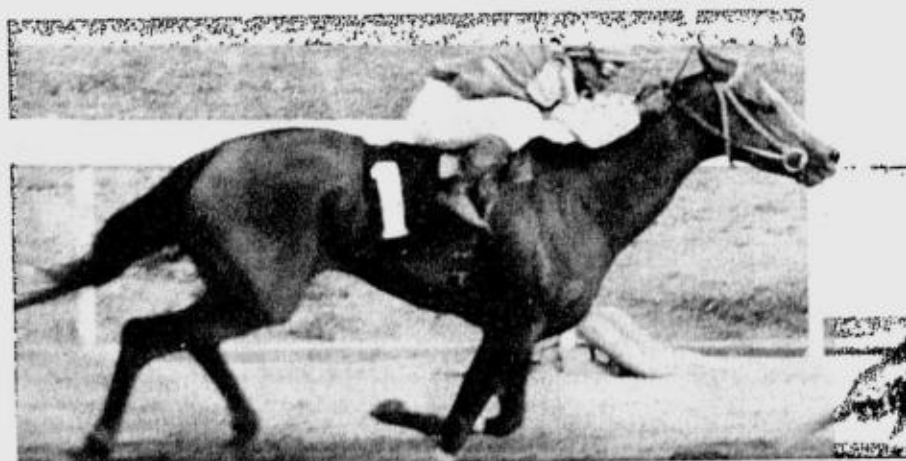
Handled brilliantly by Jonathan B. Hernandez, the three-year-old chestnut colt jumped out of the gates hard, settled into his comfort zone before coming up with an unmatched finishing burst to complete the wire-to-wire triumph.

The progeny of Account of Grace out of Es Verdad clocked 1 minute and 34 seconds for the 1,500-meter race, outclassing the compact field that included fellow Triple Crown hopefuls King's Dominion and Batong Silyar.

Million Dollar, who occupied the farthest stall, refused to yield the lead to the fleet-footed Antonio Alcasid Jr.-ridden Batong Silyar and comfortably showed the way as the field passed the judges' stand for the first time.

King's Dominion, the Bull Market out of Reasonable Share offspring who owns a potent finishing kick, got to within a length of Million Dollar near the far turn.

But Million Dollar responded to a slight



JOCKEY JB Hernandez rides to victory in this file photo.

prodding by Hernandez, zooming to a three-length lead after the final turn to win with plenty to spare with quarter times of 17, 24, 25, 27. The win was worth P200,000 for owner Nap Chua.

While Million Dollar frolicked in setting the pace, Spectacular Play rallied mightily under veteran rider Jesus C. Guce to pocket the Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. Cup and share the day's limelight.

Guce worked the four-year-old chestnut filly Spectacular Play from fifth spot in the 1,600-meter race, picking off the pace-set-

ters one-by-one to win over the favored speedball Mamaya by four lengths.

The far fourth pick clocked 1:39.5 for the mile with quarter times of 25, 24, 24, 26 to win the P300,000 top prize. Mamaya won P112,500 for finishing second, while Mar-que, a longshot from the Hermie Esguerra stables, rallied for third worth P62,500.

The winning time was half a second off the track record by Cover Girl last year. The two races were part of a 13-race schedule that formally ended celebrations of the 32nd Marho Founders' Cup.

PJ Tierro, rising star of tennis

IF BASKETBALL DID NOT CAPTIVATE them, (Carlos) Lozaga, (Robert) Jaworski, (Ramon) Fernandez, (Alvin) Patrimonio and (Rico) Villanueva could have been famous too in another sport like tennis because they have the height and build. They could have been world-class players competing in the Wimbledon, French Open, US Open, Australian Open and all the other ATP events.

PJ Tierro is aiming to realize that goal. With his long reach and towering height, this 6-foot-1 athlete from Olongapo City is slowly but surely reaching that target. Now the country's No. 1 tennis player, the 20-year-old Tierro has moved up in the ATP ladder to 927th from his previous 1,171.

Tierro is supported by a dedicated group

of trainers, coaches and sponsors. He is now on his third year of a five-year development program run by veteran tennis coach Beeyong Sison and bankrolled by sportsman Jean Henri Lhuillier.

Under the program, Tierro is trained to acquire playing skills not only by the typical training workouts but by competing in actual tournaments here and abroad. The team believes that for Tierro to learn more about the game, he should travel to other countries and play in different surfaces such as clay, shell and grass against some of the world's top netters and under all playing conditions.

"I personally believe in PJ's talent," said Lhuillier. "He has the heart and dedication to pursue excellence in his sport. Provided

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Inigo



with the right training and exposure, PJ will reach his full potential."

The Filipino gained the attention of former Wimbledon champion Pat Cash while attending the Pat Cash Tennis Academy in Brisbane in 2003. "Tierro is definitely a talent with a world-class forehand," Cash said. It was also in 2003 when Tierro's potential was first noticed. He reached the finals of

the Cebuana Lhuillier Men's Circuit where he lost to then No. 1 ranked Johnny Arcilla. Tierro advanced to the finals after beating then No. 2 and Davis Cup player Joseph Victorino in the semifinals.

In 2004, Tierro played in the Davis Cup Zonals where he defeated Hong Kong's Hiu Tung (ATP 970), capping the year with a nail-biting 6-4, 5-7, 6-4 victory over Rolando Ruel in the finals of the Spex-Phila Open. In his travels to Europe, Tierro spent a total of 10 weeks in Germany competing in non-ATP/ITF Open tournaments that boosted his confidence. He took part in his first ATP/ITF event in the latter part of 2004 during the \$25,000 India Satellite Circuit where he played alongside ATP ranked players.

2005 was a busy year for Tierro. He practically lived in a suitcase, playing in various local tournaments and in several Asian countries such as Indonesia, India, Thailand and Japan as part of the country's preparation for the 23rd Southeast Asian Games. That paid off as Tierro, together with Johnny Arcilla and Fil-American netters Cecil Mamiit and Eric Taino, won the SEA Games' team gold medal. The team's strong showing revived interest in the sport and boosted our chances as well of making good in the coming Doha Asian Games.

"I'm so thankful that I have the support of my parents (Bayani and Melba Tierro), coaches and sponsors, especially sir Jan Jenri, in pursuing my career in tennis," Tierro said.

MONDAY, MAY 1, 2006

SPORTS

Adamson tossers eye solo lead vs SSC

TOP MEETS BOTTOM TODAY AS Adamson guns for its third straight victory against winless San Sebastian even as Philippine Christian shoots for its second win in three starts against struggling University of the East in the V-League presented by Shakey's at the Blue Eagle Gym.

Led by the talented Cherry Rose Macatangay, the Lady Falcons swept the Lady Dolphins, 25-14, 25-20, 25-20, before struggling past the Lyceum Lady Pirates, 25-20, 24-24, 24-26, 25-15, to share the lead with La Salle.

The Lady Archers, seeking a third straight crown in this tournament organized by Sports Vision Management Group, Inc., proved steadier than rivals Ateneo Lady Eagles, 25-13, 25-22, 18-25, 21-25, 15-11, late Sunday for their second straight win.

The Lady Falcons are expected to encounter stiff resistance as the reigning NCAA champions are out to bounce back from successive setbacks to La Salle and PCU last week.

Adamson and SSC tangle at 6 p.m. while PCU and UE clash in the opener at 4 p.m. ABC-5 will telecast the games beginning at

GAMES TODAY (Blue Eagle Gym)

4 p.m.—PCU vs UE

6 p.m.—Adamson vs San Sebastian

4:30 p.m. Admission is free.

San Sebastian bowed to La Salle's power game, 21-25, 20-25, 19-25, then dropped a heartbreaking 23-25, 22-25, 25-14, 25-21, 19-21 loss to the Lady Dolphins that sent them reeling at the bottom of the eight-team pack in this event backed by Mikasa, Accel and ABC-5.

The Lady Stags vow to come out smarter

against the San Marcelino-based spikers.

"We just hope to learn from our loss to PCU by playing harder in our next game," said SSC coach Roger Gorayeb, who led the Mendiola-based spikers to 11 straight titles in one long NCAA stretch.

Gorayeb is expected to rely anew on Thai guest player Bualae Jaroensri, who pumped in a season-best 35 points, including 31 on attacks in her debut.

Jaroensri, a 23-year-old power hitter, will be up against an equally formidable foe in Macatangay, the country's top player today.

"That would be an interesting match-up,

one that shouldn't be missed," said Adamson mentor Dulce Pante, who coached the San Marcelino-based school to a pair of runner-up finishes in the UAAP and the University Games last year, in Filipino.

Meanwhile, the Lady Dolphins hope to sustain the momentum of that big victory over the Lady Stags and improve their 1-1 (win-loss) record. The Lady Warriors, on the other hand, are seeking to end a two-game skid.

"We just want to keep on playing hard and win more games," said PCU coach Butch Odron.

Tan Ho, Murrell shine in Toby's tennis

Top 16-under seed Balce falls short; Barte pulls through

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION Academy's Jasmine Tan Ho pulled off a 6-1, 6-4 win over top seed Shanine Olivarez yesterday to pocket the girls' 12-under title in the 2006 Toby's Age-Group Tennis Championships at the Metropolitan Tennis Club in Rockwell Center.

It was the first-ever 12-under title for the 11-year-old Tan Ho after a runner-up finish in the Triflex National Age-Group recently.

In the boys division, unranked Jonathan Murrell stunned top seed Mark Balce, 7-5, 6-3, to capture the 16-under title while top



BARTE: Champ, as expected

seed Ralph Kevin Barte outclassed Johnwill Baldonado, 6-1, 6-2, to win the 18-under crown in the event supported by Prince, Aktivade, Equipe, Eastpak, Nas-sau and Powerbar.

Top seed Jose Lorenzo Ferrer breezed past No. 4 Kim Polero, 6-1, 6-1, to win his third straight boys' 14-under title. The incoming grade 7 student at Xavier School won the Milo-Philam leg and Juntaphil Juniors in Baguio early this year. He also won the 12-under and 14-under titles in the 2005 PCA Open Juniors.

No. 1 Dheo Talatayod defeated second seed Calvin Canlas, 6-0,

6-4, to clinch the boys' 16-under title while unseeded Jurene Mendoza of Olongapo City bagged the unisex 10-under title over third seed Vince Salas, 6-1, 6-3.

In other girls finals results, top seed Jessica Marie Agra won the 18-under title over second pick Trudy Gine Amoranto, 5-4 (ret.). Agra had earlier won the 16-under title after posting a 6-2, 6-7 (4), 7-5 victory over Amoranto.

Fifth seed Martina Guba of La Carlota, Negros Occidental won the 14-under championship over fourth seed Sarah Jane Lim, 7-5, 6-1.

SPORTSWATCH

Joseph summer camp set

A COMPLETE SUMMER LEARNING EXPERIENCE awaits participants in the six-day kids' camp to be held at Camp Cal in Lake Caliraya in Laguna this month. Open to kids 7 to 15 years old, the camp is a fun experience in the great outdoors with participants spending their mornings swimming, kayaking and sailing.

Skills are developed thru trekking, island adventures, and orienting, while afternoons are spent stimulating the kids' minds through painting, beading, tie-dyeing, music appreciation and cooking. For inquiries, call Mariel at 810-9606 to 10.

Personalized cage clinic

KIDS AND YOUNG ADULTS ARE ASSURED OF rigid training and personalized instruction from some of the country's top mentors and players in the Coach E Basketball School which opens tomorrow at San Bada-Alabang. International Basketball Academy president Xavy Nunag yesterday thanked rector-president Anscar J. Chupungco, OSB, treasurer Benedict M. Fabia, OSB, and other San Bada officials for hosting the school founded by former PBA coach Eric Altamirano. Registration on site tomorrow starts at 9 a.m. Sessions will be held twice a week (Tuesdays and Fridays) for the whole month of May. For inquiries, call 631-1195 or 0921-7562639, or e-mail lba_phil@yahoo.com.

67 tiffs in San Juan derby

COCKFIGHT ENTHUSIASTS CONVERGE today at the San Juan Coliseum for a special 5-cock derby which kicks off at 5 p.m. with 67 matches lined up. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complex 3000. Bacolod breeder Arnold Mendoza, the derby host, assembled a tough cast of participants from rivals National Cockers Association and the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines. Carrying the colors for NCA are congressmen Iggy Arroyo, Gerry "Boy" Espina and Butch Pichay, Rudy Albano, the Sundance group, Danny Valero, Gov. Ito Ynares, Boy Jiao, Ruel Ricafort and Elian Nagano. Patrick Antonio leads the powerhouse GCAP team that includes Tony Lasala, Rep. Jing Paras, Mayor Dennis Pineda, Benjie Lim, Pol Estrellado, Boy Royo, Bong Villanueva, and boxing champ Manny Pacquiao, Eric dela Rosa and Jun Jingo.

Makati 'Salpukan' all set

THE "SUMMER SALPUKAN" 6-COCK DERBY, a seven-day cockfighting spectacle with P4.4 million in prizes at stake, resumes on Tuesday at the Makati Coliseum. Participants vying in Tuesday's 3-cock third round eliminations must submit entries today until 9 p.m. For inquiries, call 896-3545 or 895-6475. Backed up by B-Meg Derby Ace, the super derby has attracted more than 300 entries as of yesterday. Promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co said that no straight six cocks will be allowed in any day since participants must pass through the qualifying rounds. Provincial cockers and walk-in participants may still field an entry either on May 4 or 6, said Orillaza.

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—Shy Girl (3), Society Climber (5), Marvellous Jay (4)

Race 2—(Tri)—Noor (6), Magic Dancer (3), Silver Cho Cho (7), Cool Turner (2)

Race 3—(Tri)—Sound Value (2), Top Of D'Lime (6), Mas Que Nada (3), Reporter (5)

Race 4—(Tri)—Joker (5), Queen Banana (1), Classy Pages (6), High Spirit (3)

Race 5—(Tri)—Wet N Wild (1), Daldalera (5), Song Bird (6), Centra (4)

Race 6—(Tri)—Simply Gold (6), Smooth Strike (3), Well Hated (2), Gold Favor (7)

Race 7—(Tri)—Dul Paris (2), Don't Tell Ella (4), Angel Of Light (3)

Race 8—(Tri)—Remus (6), Blitzkrieg (3), Reason To Believe (1), Ilang Ilang Queen (7)

Race 9—(Tri)—Pirouette (5), Fair Urdula (4), Golden Act (3), Letshavaparty (2)

Race 10—(Tri)—Special Science (4), Hale And Hearty (6), Awesome Power (1), Galaxy's Charm (3)

Race 11—(Tri)—Love And Money (4), American Beauty/Diamond Sky (6), Magic Evan Ko (5), Something Silver (3)

Race 12—(Tri)—Golden Touch (6), Honoree (2), Lady Tycoon (5), Napa Valley (7)

Race 13—(Tri)—Super Light (3), Gold Print (7), Setosa (11), Thereshope (3), Sea Star (4), Maximum Impact (8), Mr. Quickie (5)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
TONDO MEDICAL CENTER
Balut, Tondo, Manila

TMC-BIDS & AWARD COMMITTEE

INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Tondo Medical Center hereby invites sealed written bid for the procurement and delivery of Food Stuff, Medical and Various Equipment, Drugs & Medicines, Dental X-ray, Medical & Surgical Supplies, Laboratory reagents for 2nd semester Cy. 2006.

Interested applicants must submit pre-qualifications/supporting document, payment of non-refundable fee for Drugs & Medicine (1000) Dental, X-ray, Medical/Surgical, Laboratory Reagent (1,000) Food Stuff (800) Medical & Various Equipment (1,500).

For complete list please get a copy from the supply Office, Balut, Tondo, Manila.

The Schedule of Bidding Activities are as follows:

	Issuance of bids	Pre-Bid Conference	Submission of Bids	Opening of Bids	
Drugs and Medicine	April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006	May 15, 2006 10:00 AM	June 13, 2006 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	June 13, 2006 10:30 AM	Revolving Fund, Income, Regular Fund
	April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006	May 16, 2006 10:00 AM	June 14, 2006 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	June 14, 2006 10:30 AM	
Medical/Surgical Supplies, X-ray, Dental Supplies & Laboratory reagents	April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006	May 16, 2006 10:00 AM	June 14, 2006 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	June 14, 2006 10:30 AM	
	April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006	May 17, 2006 10:00 AM	June 15, 2006 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	June 15, 2006 10:30 AM	
Food Stuff	April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006	May 17, 2006 10:00 AM	June 15, 2006 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	June 15, 2006 10:30 AM	
	April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006	May 18, 2006 10:00 AM	June 16, 2006 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	June 16, 2006 10:30 AM	
Medical & Various Equipment	April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006	May 18, 2006 10:00 AM	June 16, 2006 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	June 16, 2006 10:30 AM	
	April 24, 2006 to May 12, 2006	May 18, 2006 10:00 AM	June 16, 2006 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM	June 16, 2006 10:30 AM	

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bid bond, performance bond, pre-bid conference, Bid evaluation an award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reforms Act.

All activities shall be held at Tondo Medical Center, Conference Room, Balut, Tondo, Manila unless announced otherwise.

For further details please contact Secretariat Tondo Medical Center at Tel. No. 251-8421 to 23 loc. 207.

TONDO MEDICAL CENTER BAC, RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY BID, TO ANNUL THE BIDDING PROCESS, REJECT ALL BIDS AT ANYTIME PRIOR TO THE AWARD OF THE CONTRACT, WITHOUT THEREBY INCURRING ANY LIABILITY TO THE AFFECTED BIDDERS OR ANY OBLIGATION TO INFORM THE AFFECTED BIDDER/BIDDERS ON THE REASON FOR DOING SO. TMC-BAC ASSUMES NO OBLIGATION TO COMPENSATE OR INDEMNIFY BIDS NOR DEEM IT GUARANTEED THAT AN AWARD WILL BE MADE.

(Sgd.) VICTOR J. DELA CRUZ, M.D., CESO IV
Medical Center Chief II

(PDI - April 24 & May 1, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE POSTAL CORPORATION
Liwasing Bonifacio, 1000 Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Postal Corporation, through its Special Bids and Awards Committee for MPO-IPS Project, invites e-Business Solution providers, specifically those who involve in the supply of computer hardware and software infrastructure of the International Postal System (IPS), to apply for eligibility and to bid for the different category of the hereunder project:

Project Name: Modernization of the Processing at the Mail Processing Office, CMEC, PPC (MPO-IPS Installation Project)
Identification Index No. QSFPHL0403LT01
Procurement Description: Procurement of computer hardware and software infrastructure of the Int'l Postal System (IPS)

SOURCE OF FUND	CATEGORY	PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENT	APPROVED BUDGET (In US Dollar)	CONTRACT PERIOD
Quality Service Fund of the Universal Postal Union	1. Computer HW and SW	Supply of computer hardware & software, printer including installation (electrical wiring and cabling)	50,543.37	Forty-Five (45) days
	2. Laser scanner, printer and its consumables	Supply of barcode scanner, barcode printer and its accessories	15,448.29	
	3. Digital weighing scale to be interfaced w/ computer	Supply of digital weighing scale w/ RJ-232 interface	4,800.00	
	4. Computer tables and AC	Supply of furniture/Fixture	2,106.59	
	TOTAL		72,898.25	

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking similar projects within at least five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The eligibility check as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use the pass/fail criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Check and Screening, Bid Security, Pre-Bid Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification, Award of Contract and, Performance Security shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). The complete schedule of activities is as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DATE	TIME
1. Issuance of Eligibility Requirement & Bid Documents	April 26, 2006	9 AM-4 PM
2. Deadline of Submission of Application for Eligibility and to Bid	May 18, 2006	4 PM
3. Pre-Bid Conference	May 23, 2006	1 PM
4. Deadline for the Submission of Bid Proposal	June 07, 2006	9 AM
5. Opening of Bid	June 07, 2006	10 AM
6. Post-qualification	Within 7 days after opening of bids	
7. Notice of Award	Within 14 days after post-qualification	

Accreditation Fee is P400.00, Eligibility Fee is P600.00, Bid Document Fees are a.) P4,000.00 for computer HW & SW b.) P1,500.00 for scanner/printer c.) P500.00 for digital weighing scale d.) P200.00 for furniture/fixture respectively.

The Philpost reserves the right to reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without incurring any liability from the affected bidder(s).

For information and details, please call:

The Secretariat
UPU-QSF - Special Bids and Awards Committee
Philippine Postal Corporation
G/F Mezzanine, Manila CPO Bldg
Liwasing Bonifacio, 1000 Manila
Tel No (632) 527-3824 (632) 527-0140

APPROVED:

LUIS D. CARLOS
Chairman
Special BAC for UPU-QSF
MPO-IPS Projects

(PDI - April 24 & May 1, 2006)



Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Regional Office No. X
Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City 9000
(088) 858-7422, (088) 858-1498
e-mail: coar@webmail.net

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Procurement of IT Equipments and other PPE items

1. The Commission on Audit, Region X, intends to apply the sum of Four Million Six Hundred Seventy-Seven Thousand Pesos (Php4,677,000.00) broken down as follows:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION	Sub-ABC
67 units COMPUTERS. Branded CPU compatible with 32 bit-64bit simultaneously, 1.8 GHz Capable to run on multiple OS platforms (Windows, Linux, etc.); 1MB cache level 2 On-board graphics controller card 8 0 MB or higher (Video not shared on RAM) 512 MB Memory, dual memory channel; 1 hypertransport link (8Gbps) With built-in 2 firewire ports IEEE 1394; With built-in 6 USB 2.0 ports 1 PCI-express x 16 slot (reserve for graphics accelerator); 2 PCI-express x 1 slot 4 Conventional PCI slots (32-bit, 33 Mhz); 400W power supply; AVR 500W 80 GB Serial ATA, 7200 rpm, DVD ROM optical drive; 15" color monitor Keyboard & mouse with pad; 3 yrs warranty	Php 3,819,000.00
1 unit COMPUTER. Branded (with the same specifications above except for RAM- 1 GB Memory)	65,000.00
30 units UNINTERRUPTED POWER SUPPLY, 400W power output or higher	201,000.00
20 units COMPUTER TABLE, Steel Frame, SIGMA	60,000.00
14 units PRINTERS, Hp Laser Jet, up to 15ppm, resolution up to 1200 x 1200 dpi, Memory 8 MB	280,000.00
3 units LAPTOP COMPUTERS. Branded, 1.7 GHz/533 MHz FSB 512 MB PC2-4200 DDR2 RAM, 2 MB L2 cache, 60GB 5400 rpm HDD Intel 945 GM Chipset, CD-RW/DVD-ROM Combo Drive, 1.44 MB FD 10/100 Mbps NIC, Intel 802.11 b/g wireless (MPC), 2 USB, 1 parallel, external display, RJ-45 (ethernet) and RJ-11 (modem) ports Keyboard and Mouse, OEM Windows XP Professional	252,000.00
	Php 4,677,000.00

being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Procurement of IT Equipments and other PPE items. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

2. Interested Bidders may obtain a complete set of Bidding Documents starting April 27 to May 5, 2006 upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) from the BAC Secretariat c/o RCD Hesselinda A. Valencia, (088) 858-7422, COA Regional Office No. X, Cagayan de Oro City.

3. The Commission on Audit will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on May 10, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. at COA Conference Room, COA Regional Office No. X, Cagayan de Oro City.

4. Deadline for submission of Bids shall be on May 24, 2006, at 2:00 p.m. at COA Regional Office No. X, Cagayan de Oro City. Immediately after the deadline, bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the above address.

5. The Commission on Audit reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) FELIX P. ALBINDA
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
(088) 858-2954
e-mail: falbinda@yahoo.com

(PDI - April 24 & May 1, 2006)



Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City
E-mail Address: ltombbox@lto.gov.ph • Website: www.lto.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

106 units Patrol Motor Cycles for the use of LTO Sectoral Head Office, Regional Offices, CAR & CARAGA

The Land Transportation Office, through Fund 151 (MVUC) intends to apply the sum of Fourteen Million Five Hundred Sixty Thousand Pesos (P14,560,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of payment for the 106 units Patrol Motor Cycles for the use of LTO Sectoral Head Office, Regional Offices, CAR & CARAGA. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The Land Transportation Office now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the items. The required delivery schedule will be indicated in the approved Contract. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietors, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of when grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Sub-Committee and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 10,000.00, in the form of cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The Land Transportation Office will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on April 21, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. at the LTO-Library East Avenue, Quezon City. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before May 3, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or Irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank guarantee	One and a half Percent (1 1/2%)
3. Surety bond	Two and a half Percent (2 1/2%)
4. Foreign government guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)

Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on May 3, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. at LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The Land Transportation Office reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Land Transportation Office
Atty. Jimmy G. Pesigan - Chairman, BAC

Engr. Roberto S. Sa, Chairman, BAC Sub-Committee
Property Section, LTO, East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 929-9077 - telefax

(Sgd.) ATTY. JIMMY G. PESIGAN
BAC-Chairman

PDI - May 1, 2006

SUERTRES

6 9 8

EZ2 4 23
(All in exact order)

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

10 12 23 30 38 42

P28,177,063.20

SPORTS

Bucks slow Pistons; NJ Nets charge back

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN—Michael Redd and the Milwaukee Bucks showed the Detroit Pistons they don't plan to go down without a fight in the National Basketball Association playoffs.

Redd scored 15 of his playoff career-high 40 points in the third quarter and Mo Williams added 20 off the bench on Saturday as the Bucks beat the Pistons 124-104, claiming their first win in three games of the best-of-seven Eastern Conference first-round series.

Reserve Joe Smith scored 13 points and TJ Ford handed out 15 assists for the Bucks, who shot 60 percent and made 11-of-17 from the arc.

After suffering back-to-back double-figure losses at Detroit in the first two games of the series, Milwaukee put together an early lead and never looked back.

Ford admitted that the prospect of a possible

sweep by the powerful Pistons was a strong motivator for Milwaukee.

"Nobody wants to be swept," Ford said. "Nobody."

Redd frustrated Detroit's defense throughout. He shot 14-of-21 from the floor, including 4-of-5 3-pointers, and also grabbed five rebounds.

The Bucks held a seven-point edge at intermission before pulling away for good as Redd hit two 3-pointers during a commanding 23-6 burst through the first eight minutes of the period, helping build an 84-60 advantage.

The Pistons allowed the most points since giving up 120 to Washington on Nov. 25.

Chauncey Billups, who scored 26 points, made two free throws to cut the deficit to 94-79 with 10 1/2 minutes remaining in the game. However, Redd responded by scoring Milwaukee's next three baskets, keeping the Pistons at bay. The Bucks will try to even the series in Milwaukee on Monday.

In Indianapolis, the New Jersey Nets knotted their series with the Pacers at two games apiece with a 97-88 victory.

Vince Carter scored eight of his 28 points in the final four minutes and added seven assists, six rebounds and six steals for the Nets, who host game five on Tuesday.

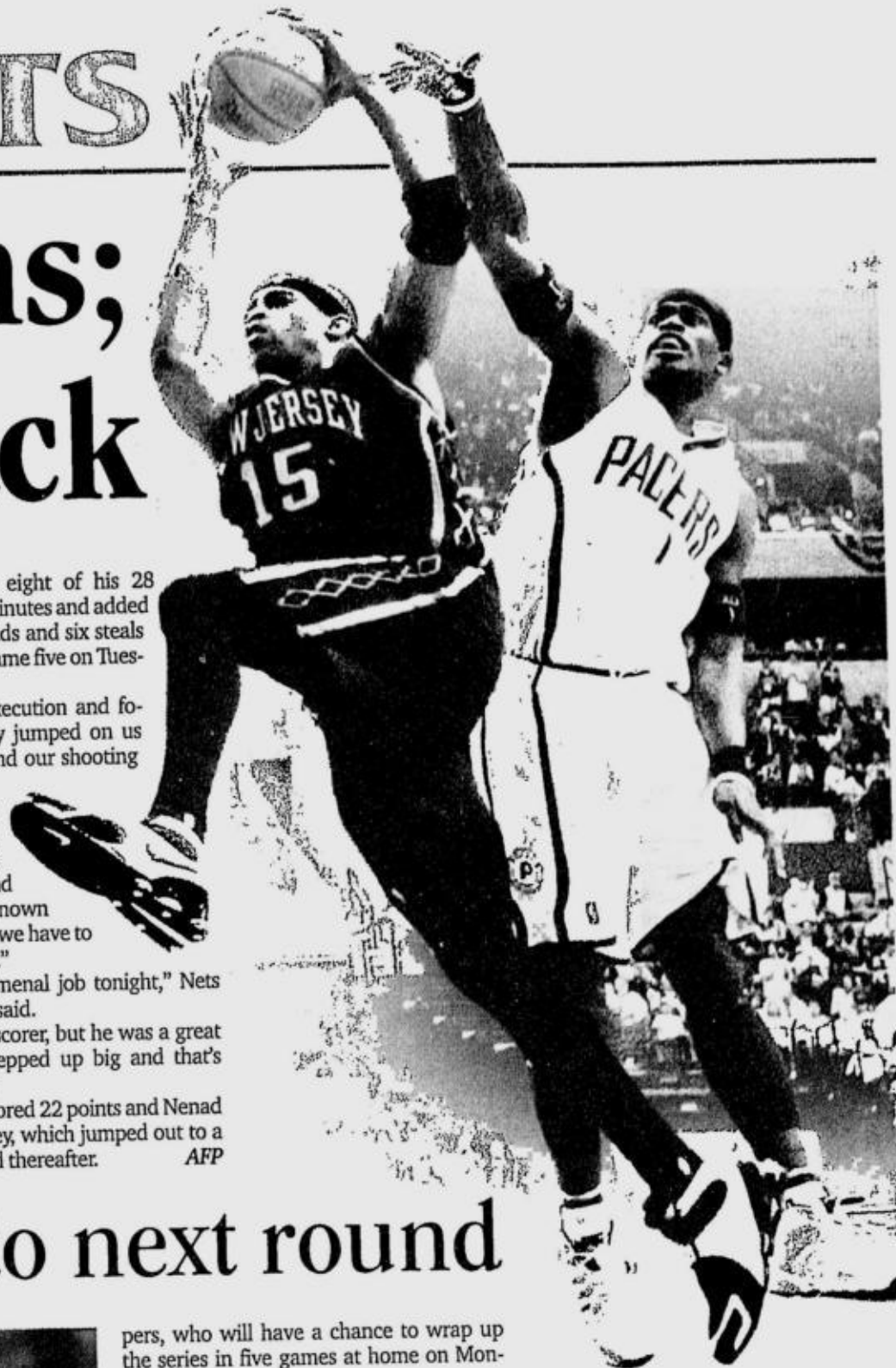
"It came down to execution and focus," Carter said. "They jumped on us quick the other night and our shooting went south."

"Tonight, we weathered the storm and stayed focused. This was a big win for us and now, if we want to be known as a good playoff team, we have to protect our home court."

"Vince did a phenomenal job tonight," Nets coach Lawrence Frank said.

"Not only was he a scorer, but he was a great playmaker, too. He stepped up big and that's what great players do."

Richard Jefferson scored 22 points and Nenad Krstic 21 for New Jersey, which jumped out to a 22-8 advantage and led thereafter. **AFP**



NEW JERSEY Nets superstar Vince Carter (left) soars past Indiana's Stephen Jackson for a layup. **AP**

Mavs, Clippers move closer to next round

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE—THE DALLAS Mavericks rallied for an overtime victory here Saturday to move within one game of a first-round sweep of Memphis in the National Basketball Association playoffs.

Dirk Nowitzki sank a game-tying 3-pointer with 15 seconds left in regulation and scored 24 of his 36 points after half-time as the Mavericks rallied for a 94-89 overtime triumph over the Grizzlies and a commanding 3-0 lead in their best-of-seven Western Conference series.

"They basically had the game won," said Nowitzki. "Obviously, it's a big win for us. If they make it 2-1, they'd be even more fired up the next game. So this is great."

The Los Angeles Clippers also moved within one game of advancing with a 100-86 victory in Denver that gave them a 3-1 lead over the Nuggets.

Memphis, which entered with an 0-10 all-time postseason record, led 76-72 with just 28 seconds left.

Dallas' Jason Terry split a pair of free throws, but the Mavericks corralled the rebound and called a timeout.

Terry missed a short runner on the ensuing play, but Erick Dampier deflected the



DIRK Nowitzki and the Dallas Mavericks go 3-0 up against the Memphis Grizzlies. **AP**

offensive rebound out to Nowitzki, who took one dribble to his left before knocking down a heavily contested 3-pointer from the top of the arc to forge a 76-76 tie.

Memphis missed a chance to win in regulation when Chuckie Atkins came up short on a driving layup from the right wing at the buzzer.

The score was tied again, 79-79, with

3:48 remaining in the extra session when Nowitzki converted a short fallaway jumper from the left elbow to give Dallas the lead for good.

The Mavericks can complete a four-game sweep with a win on Monday.

In Denver, Corey Maggette scored 19 points and Shaun Livingston contributed 16 and six assists off the bench for the Clip-

pers, who will have a chance to wrap up the series in five games at home on Monday.

All-Star Elton Brand, Sam Cassell and Cuttino Mobley each scored 11 points for the Clippers, who moved within one win of their first playoff series triumph since 1976, when the franchise was known as the Buffalo Braves.

The Clippers built 52-40 edge when Maggette and Livingston drained consecutive jumpers 3 1/2 minutes before half-time.

Denver's Carmelo Anthony, who scored 17 points, made 1-of-2 free throws eight minutes into the second half to cut the deficit to 67-58. But the Nuggets got no closer as Los Angeles bridged the quarters with an 18-7 surge.

Marcus Camby and Andre Miller scored 14 points apiece and Earl Boykins added 11 for Denver, which shot 41 percent overall but once again struggled from 3-point range. **AFP**

NBA on TV:
Solar Sports—Cleveland vs Washington (7:30 p.m.)
RPN 9—San Antonio vs Sacramento (7:30 p.m.)

Hot Nadal molds more clay success

BARCELONA, SPAIN—DEFENDING CHAMPION Rafael Nadal won his 46th straight match on clay when he defeated fellow Spaniard Nicolas Almagro, 7-6 (2), 6-3, Saturday to claim his place in the final at the Open Seat Godo.

Tommy Robredo, champion in 2004, beat unseeded Stanislas Wawrinka of Switzerland, 6-4, 6-4, to set up an all-Spanish final.

Nadal and Robredo have met twice before, in the third round in Madrid and the semifinals in Bastad in 2005. Nadal won both in straight sets.

"It could be a long match as he runs a lot," said Robredo of his final against top-seeded Nadal.

Nadal said: "It's going to be a difficult match, it'll be tough physically."

Guillermo Villas holds the Open era record on clay with 53 consecutive wins, while 11-time Grand Slam champion Bjorn Borg also has 46 straight victories.

"You can't compare me to Borg, he was the greatest tennis player of all time," Nadal said. "I can't see myself winning five Wimbledon."

But Almagro could not see an end to Nadal's winning streak.

"I think Rafa will make his own mark on the game. Whoever beats him on clay will have

earned great merit," Almagro said.

Robredo, who reached the semifinals at the Monte Carlo Masters last week, said he had recovered from an abdominal injury.

"In Monte Carlo, I noticed a strain in the abdominal region. I began playing doubles here in Barcelona but had to give up because I couldn't serve without pain, but the rest helped to clear it up," the 23-year-old Robredo said.

Almagro had won nine straight matches, including his first title in Valencia two weeks ago. He had beaten three seeded players in Barcelona and hadn't dropped a set until this loss. **AP**



NADAL

Champions score new badminton point system

SENDAI, JAPAN—OLYMPIC AND WORLD badminton champion Taufik Hidayat of Indonesia has joined Chinese stars here to oppose the new scoring system being tested at the Thomas and Uber Cup in Japan.

"I don't like it. I don't understand why the IBF (International Badminton Federation) always tries to change the rules," said the 25-year-old Indonesian after playing his first match in six weeks Saturday following an injury layoff.

"Under the new format, there's not an exciting situation and spectators also do not like it. The game has become monotonous."

"Previously they tried to introduce a seven-point system. Why can't they stick to the same rules like tennis? Of course, sponsors and television are important, but they should also think about players," added Hidayat.

The IBF has been testing a new scoring system, using a 21-point rally scoring format to make the game shorter and more exciting.

IBF deputy president Punch Gunalan has said: "Change is necessary. We want to make it a sport that is orientated towards family entertainment and is media- and player-friendly."

"At present, under the 15-point system, no one knows how long it will take the game to finish. If it is agreed, it will become a permanent feature."

Under the new format, a point is awarded for a rally won and whoever scores the point holds service. For the doubles, the winner of a rally holds service but there will be no second server.

If the IBF approves the format in May in Tokyo, it should be adopted for all tournaments including the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing.

China's Zhang Ning and Xie Xingfang, the top two female singles players in the world, have also criticized the new scoring system during their defense of the Uber Cup. **AFP**

Kim pulls away from Miyazato on 18th

REUNION, FLORIDA—SOUTH KOREA'S Kim Mi-hyun shot a 3-under-par 69 Saturday and took a three-shot lead over Japan's Ai Miyazato after three rounds of the Ginn Clubs & Resorts Open.

Kim pulled away on the final hole, birdieing the par-4 18th while Miyazato double bogeyed.

Christina Kim was alone in third place, five shots off the lead after three straight birdies closed her 69 on a windy day that made already slick greens even more daunting, adding to the challenge of a long course

that most tour players hadn't seen before this week and still haven't quite figured out.

"It's got a lot of strange little nuances that no one really knows because not a lot of people have played here a lot," Christina Kim said. "The greens are what really kills us. It's one of the longest courses we get all year, just over 6,500 yards long. And then you've got the wind. This course, it can be a monster."

Maybe so, but Kim Mi-hyun—who last won on the US LPGA tour in 2002—clearly enjoys the layout. The former American LP-

GA rookie of the year made only one bogey Saturday and four birdies.

"I'm nervous every day, every day before when I tee off," Kim said. "But after I tee off, I forget about that."

She made a birdie on No. 18 while Miyazato, one of her playing partners, four-putted.

"I have to forget. Tomorrow is another day," Miyazato said. "I don't feel like this was the end of the world. I still have a lot of chances left."

With one round left, only nine women are within nine shots of the lead. **AP**

Unheralded Couch goes worst-to-first

NEW ORLEANS—CHRIS COUCH WENT from worst to first Saturday, shooting an 8-under-par a day after just making the cut to take the lead after three rounds of the Zurich Classic.

One day after closing with two tough pars to make the cut on the number, Couch climbed the leaderboard and signed his card 30 minutes before 36-hole leader Joe Durant teed off.

The wind increased in strength, birdies became harder to find, and the day ended with Couch in the lead by himself.

"I'm not sure I would have believed it,"

Couch said. He was at 12-under 204 and had a one-shot lead over Durant (73) and Charles Howell III, who also played early and shot 66.

Durant made only five pars. He fell four shots behind and into the middle of the pack, picked himself up with three straight birdies, had a gust knock his wedge into the water for bogey, and he finished with a 25-foot birdie that left him a good chance to win for the first time in five years.

Dean Wilson (66) and Cameron Beckman (67), both early starters, were at 10-under 206.

Masters champion Phil Mickelson shot 68, marred only by a bogey from the bunker on the 17th, and was three shots behind along with six others.

The PGA Tour did not have records of anyone who went from the cutline to the 54-hole lead.

The rally for Couch continued his unusual week, which included getting lost Sunday night trying to find his car, accepting a ride from strangers, getting dropped off in a rough part of town, and running to find police. Then there were stories that he was robbed and kidnapped. **AP**



AI MIYAZATO (standing) falls three strokes behind Kim Mi-hyun. **AP**

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ELIJAH Castillo at the festival

WITH Del Mundo during the open forum

"Christine Dayrit (Cinema Evaluation Board) helped us find sponsors for the Singapore trip," Del Mundo relayed. "The 200-seater venue was full and the audience was genuinely interested and asked questions during the fo-

But she would attend the

Laguardia added, addressing groups seeking an "X" rating for the controversial movie, "We cannot just ban it. It will get an 'X' if all the factors that require such a

For the movie to be stamped "X" (not fit for public exhibition), according to the board's rules and regulations, it should fail on eight (and all eight) counts: 1) If it "appeals to prurient interest and satisfies only the craving for gratuitous sex or violence"; 2) "depicts in a patently lewd, offensive or demeaning manner sexual intercourse, masturbation and exhibition of genitals"; 3) "clearly constitutes an attack against any race, creed or religion"; 4) "condones or encourages the use of illegal drugs"; 5) "undermines the faith and confidence of people in government"; 6) "glorifies criminals or condones crimes"; 7) if it is "libelous or defamatory to the

LAGUARDIA/ A2-6

Globe

ENTERTAINMENT

A2

I remember Chat's triumph

... as though it were my own, as a Filipino. She had glided through the competition with such supreme confidence and charm, that the whole world cheered

By Jose Wendell P. Capili
Contributor

CHAT SILAYAN CAUGHT MY ATTENTION when she became third runner-up in the 1980 Miss Universe.

Some years later, I met her briefly when I was a pre-med student and she had been invited to judge a school-based pageant. I was as usher during that grand event, tasked to lead the judges—including Chat, Dumaguete-bred model Matea Leah Tagle and designer Renee Salud—to their appointed seats. Chat had smiled as she said thanks. She was truly charming, she was vivacious. I was delirious.

The 1980 Miss U pageant, which was held at the Sejong Cultural Center in Seoul, Korea wasn't shown live on Philippine television. Our Bb. Pilipinas candidates in major pageants abroad had not been doing well but for Melanie Marquez's victory as Miss International in Tokyo the year before. There was political and social unrest in the Philippine countryside. Filipino women were beginning to see empowerment beyond domestic chores—and beauty contests.

Still, Chat's 3rd runner-up finish made it to the headlines of The Daily Express, The Times Journal, Bulletin Today, Metro Manila Times and The Evening Post. She subsequently landed on the cover of Sunday supplements and women's magazines. When Chat flew back to Manila days later, GMA Channel 7 finally aired the competition program.

Many Filipinos certainly remember how Chat glided through the proceedings. During the swimsuit competition, she conquered Sejong just standing there, hands on her waist. The audience scream "Happy Birthday, Rosario!" after her semi-final interview with host Bob Barker ("The Price is Right").

Then Chat uttered, "Kamsahamnida



(Thank you very much)!" for which she was wildly cheered. And with Renee Salud's skillfully crafted light blue serpentina (a tight-fitting terno that flares dramatically from the knees), Chat made her biggest splash in pageant history, scoring heavily in this part of the competition. Descending Sejong's rather steep staircase while being ser-

MISS PHILIPPINES, third from left, in her famous "serpentina" on the night of her biggest triumph. Chat, very likely without knowing it, taught many compatriots how to stand proud—anywhere. The winner that year was Miss USA, Shawn Nichols Weatherly, third from right.

enaded by Korea's Little Angels to the tune of "When You Wish Upon a Star," Chat turned even more heads. So impressed were the judges, that Chat's scores climbed even higher. She was just one notch behind eventual winner Shawn Nichols Weatherly of the United States.

Weatherly has been confined to oblivion after the first season of David Hasselhoff's "Baywatch" where she took on a role. But Chat Silayan's spectacular performance at that pageant remains a part of Philippine pop culture history. Today, pageant hopefuls, debutantes, actresses, socialites and other celebrities continue to wear the serpentina to red carpet events. Chat and Renee Salud had truly revived it.

Between my studies at Tokyo and Cambridge in the mid 1990s, I received a research

fellowship from the Korean government. Immediately upon arrival at Kimpo Airport, I rushed to Sejong Cultural Center to relive Chat's glorious triumph. I felt pure exhilaration as I kissed the steps. Before after Chat, many Filipino musical artists had performed, and ruled, on this stage—Hajji Alejandro, Ryan Cayabyab, Freddie Aguilar, Snaffu Rigor, Leah Navarro, Nonong Pederio, Sometime Special, Aniano Montano, Eugene Villartuz, Louie Reyes, Tillie Moreno, Jun Latonio, Celeste Legaspi and Willy Cruz—via the now-defunct World Popular Song Festival. It felt so right to pay homage to those Philippine victories.

I never got to see Chat again after that brief encounter in college. But some of her friends became my friends, too. In fact, it was Chat's Bb. Pilipinas contemporary, Lampel Luis-Potenciano (Miss Young International 1980 runner-up, now entrepreneur and gifted writer), who relayed to me the sad news of Chat's passing.

Suddenly, I remembered Chat's impressive debut opposite Fernando Poe Jr. in "Ang Maestro." Soon after making that film, Chat became a co-emcee on "Student Canteen," with Eddie Ilarde and Bobby Ledesma. For a spell, she even got to host her own drama anthology. Then marriage beckoned. God and family became her top priorities. and so she chose to live peacefully away from the klieg lights.

Without her knowing it, Chat has taught me one valuable lesson: That with hard work and determination, Filipinos can be on equal footing with the world's very best in every imaginable stage or arena. I may never become as popular as Chat Silayan. But I know that, like her, I can be an instrument to do God and my country proud.

(The author is an associate professor at the UP College of Arts and Letters and an author with three books and numerous published articles in Europe, East/Southeast Asia, North America and Australia. He graduated from the University of Santo Tomas, University of the Philippines, the University of Tokyo and the University of Cambridge. He has received Palanca, Cultural Center of the Philippines, UST and UP awards; as well as scholarships and fellowships from the British, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Hong Kong, Philippine and Australian governments for creative writing and research. He is currently a PhD Candidate at the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University.)

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3	THE SENTINEL 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:55, 11:05 PG-13
4	SILENT HILL 11:20, 2:20, 5:20, 8:20, 11:05 R-13



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'Pepot,' . . . From page A2-1

rum." It was Castillo's first time to travel abroad, in fact his first time to ride an airplane. "I was nervous at first," he recalled, "because I had seen many disaster movies!" He managed to enjoy the rest of the trip, however. "We went on the Night Safari, where we saw wild animals like hyenas, lions and tigers up close. We also visited Sentosa Island and the Dolphin Lagoon." The group also had a blast shopping. "I bought new shoes," Castillo said. But if you ask him, the sweetest memento from Singapore is his Best Actor prize. "I'll put the trophy in my room, so that I can wake up to it every day," he quipped. It's a nifty birthday gift, too, as he turns 11 next month.

One more Pinoy

Another Filipino won at the SIFF Filmmaker John Torres' "Todo, Todo Teros" tied with Yan Liang's "Taking Father Home" from China for the NETPAC-FIPRESCI (Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema-International Federation of Film Critics) prize.

The Silver Screen Award for Best Film went to Ryuichi Hiroki's "It's Only Talk" (Japan); the Jury Prize, Riri Riza's "Gie" (Indonesia); Best Director, Kelvin Tong for "Love Story" (Hong Kong/Singapore); Best Actress, Hanan Turk for Jocelyn Saab's "Kiss Me Not in the Eyes" (Lebanon).

According to Del Mundo, "it's the first time for the Philippines to have three entries in this festival's main competition."

Apart from "Pepot" and "Todo," Raya Martin's "A Short Film About the Indio Nacional" was also in the running. "There were three Pinoy indie films out of 11 entries. In my book, that's winning," said Del Mundo.

Actually, it's the first time for SIFF to have three entries from one country," confirmed Philip Cheah, festival director. "Pepot" was particularly well-received, but the critics found all the films interesting. This year's film fest succeeded as a statement that Asian directors want to premiere their films in Asia first."

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JUDY Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo

JOLINA MAGDANGAL ON "Startalk": "We hope everyone who watches this movie ('I Love New York') will feel what all of us—myself, Marvin [Agustin], Mark [Herras] and Jennylyn [Mercado]—felt while shooting it."

We'd all love to, Jolens, as soon as you tell us exactly what it was.

Only if possible

This is Ryan Agoncillo's idea of the day he weds superstar girlfriend Judy Ann Santos: "It's going to be really private. If possible, we'd turn down any offers for airing rights ... if possible."

Many couples have found that one an "MI" (mission impossible), or at least irresistible.

Go barefoot, kids

Aga Muhlach discourages his twins Atasha and Andres from spending too much time playing video games. Instead, he said, he lets them run around the family farm in Batangas, barefoot and muddled.

We'd love to do this, too—have a family farm ... anywhere at all.

Kissing hunks

Luis Alandy was very good in his role as Kristine Hermosa's rapist in ABS-CBN's drama series "Gulong ng Palad." Proof: An old lady he ran into at the mall scolded him for it. His next challenge as an actor: Kiss another hunk, Polo Ravales, in Regal Films' comedy flick, "Manay Po."

Bye, Uncle Bob

The cremated remains of Ronald "Uncle Bob" Stewart, founder of GMA 7 Network, were brought to the Kapuso compound in Quezon City for a memorial service led by Felipe Gozon, current president and chief executive officer. Stewart, 87, passed away in Phoenix, Arizona, last month.

"Thank you for remembering me," said Uncle Bob in his last letter to Gozon in 2005. "I am pretty well on my last lap around the track."

Stewart, a war correspondent, founded Republic Broadcasting System (RBS) Channel 7 in October 1961. The urn containing his ashes is now buried in Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

Gian Carlos

"Starstruck" finalist Gian Carlos is a hemophiliac.

In the drama show "Magpakailanman," Gian, 23, confessed to having the rare genetic bleeding disorder Hemophilia A, characterized by low



GIAN Carlos

levels or complete absence of a blood protein required for clotting.

Gian, member of Final 4 of "Starstruck" Batch 3, said his serious health condition did not stop him from reaching for his dreams.

Tourist draw

Officials in Namibia hope the world media furor over a visit by pregnant Hollywood star Angelina Jolie and her partner Brad Pitt will translate into a tourist rush to the African country, famous for its huge sand dunes and vast empty spaces.

RUSHES

Reuters reports that Namibian Ambassador to the United States Hopelong Ipinge said in a letter released to the media: "If Angelina Jolie gives birth in Namibia, she would have done for our tourism sector what our tourism board budget cannot do in a year."

Defending 'Idols'

Mandy Moore says she is not among those who criticize "American Idol" contestants for wanting instant stardom. In an interview with Associated Press, Moore, 22, said, "They work so hard overcoming all of these obstacles just to get on the show in the first place, and then every week they're judged in front of all of America. It must be overwhelming, all the pressure. I give them complete credit for getting up on stage. I would crumble under that kind of pressure."

Funniest woman

Ellen Degeneres won best talk show host for the second straight year at the Daytime Emmy awards AP reported from Los Angeles. "This means a lot to me," she said Friday night from the Kodak Theater stage before telling her partner, actress Portia de Rossi, "I love you."

Lost and drunk

In Honolulu, AP also reported, "Lost" star Michelle Rodriguez surrendered to authorities to begin a five-day jail sentence for drunken driving. Rodriguez, 27, who portrays police officer Ana Lucia in the series, opted for jail time and a \$500 fine rather than 240 hours of community service.

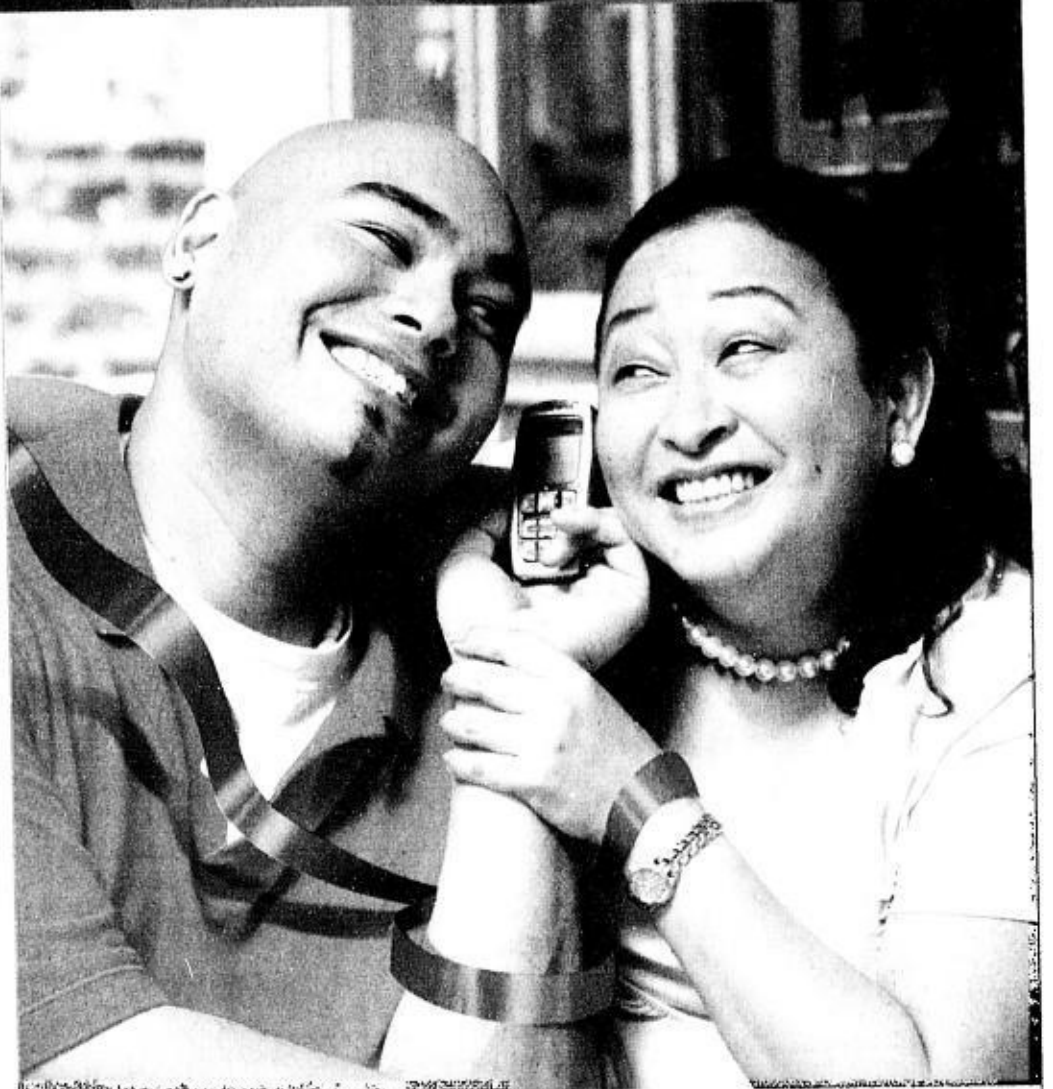
Willis' new love

Czech super model Petra Nemcova, who survived the 2004 Asian tsunami disaster, has lined up US film star Bruce Willis for her latest charity project—a book of photos of celebrities—she told Agence France Presse at the launch of her "Love Always Petra" book. But the Hollywood star that US gossip columns have described as infatuated with the Czech model and "Sports Illustrated" cover girl, is just "a good friend," Nemcova insisted.



ELLEN DeGeneres

"Gusto ko hindi lang smiley face ang greeting ko kay Mommy."



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siyempre, ang lakas mo sa **Globe**



Pilar 'Pilita' Corrales reigned on radio, stage, and in recording, movies and television

IN Vegas, with total performer Sammy Davis Jr.



By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Romy Homillada
ADDITIONAL PHOTOS COURTESY OF PILITA

ASIA'S QUEEN OF S

queen of all media.

Pilar "Pilita" Corrales is a liv

ness to the glory days of rad

television.

First stop for the Spanish b

teener, she was among the au

ateur Hour" in Cebu. "My n

was a manager for Coca Cola.

After a year in a finishing

Spain, a teen-aged Pilita retu

father Jose Corrales had died

It was a trying time for the

mom moved the family to

Manila because there were

too many sad memories in

Cebu," she recalled.

In Manila, Pilita began

her local show biz career as

a crooning—and guitar-

strumming disc jockey on

dzPi's "La Taverna." "It was

an all-Spanish show," she

said. "I hosted it for a year and

a half."

While manning the booth

she caught the eye of radi

personality Eddie Iyarde and

stage performer Bayan

Casimiro. "They persuaded n

to sing at the Manila Grand Or

Later, she also signed up wi

Her first talent fee: P50 a w

"I learned to speak Tagalog

they turned me into a comed

crooked Tagalog!"

In Clover, she performed v

and the Wing Duo (Nikki Ros

who would later become her c

Even back in Clover, she w

for her "brokeback" singing sty

"I can't just stand still wi

plained. "Bending helps me h

my lungs expand."

She was the lead star of

Wawaw. She appeared in fil

well as in "shing-a-ling" musi

boa and Visayan flicks with G

"I only guested in Sampagu

"But I recorded an album o

theme songs."

When it comes to the music

the record to beat.

"Ay, 'susmarya,' she qui

around 135 albums!"

Her first albums were reco

released abroad. "I made thr

in Hong Kong ("Pilita Live at t

Vols. 1 to 3"), two in Australi

in Japan. I sang in Japan

though I didn't speak a

Nipongo. But it was easy fo

cause my producers wrote a

Japanese lyrics syllable by sy

was like Spanish. I only had to

if the songs were happy or sad

The Japanese album was

"Pilita in Tokyo"; the Austr

bums, "Pilita with Arthur You

Tells the Story of Love." "I'll

mance and "This is Pilita" we

Records.

She became so famous in t

that a street was named Pilita

village in Melbourne, where h

ed in the late 1950s and earl

She holds the distinction

eigner to hit the Australian

song "Acer ca te mas (Come Cl

"I used to appear three time

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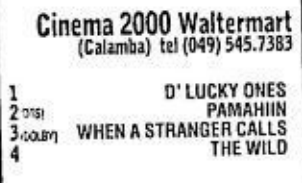
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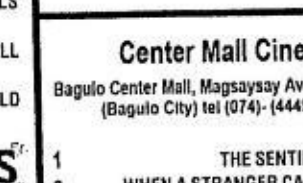
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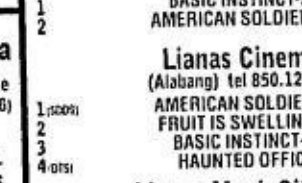
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YESTERDAY



MAMITA with her TV "sons" (from left) Raymart Santiago, Benjie Paras, Joey Marquez and Richard Gomez on GMA 7's "Lagot Ka... Isusumbong Kita"

ONG IS ALSO

ng (and singing) wit- to; stage, movies and beauty was radio. As a lience in dyRC's "Am- om (Maria Garrido) the show's sponsor." g, school in Madrid, ned to Cebu because of a heart attack. Corrales clan. "My



THE famous bend

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with German Moreno (and Angie Yungco), ose friends. as already celebrated le. ile singing," she ex- t high notes. It helps

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WITH CLOVER pals Nikki Ross and German Moreno

prime time program called 'In Melbourne Tonight,' with the Wing Duo."

Even then, fabulous sequined wardrobe was La Pilita's trademark style. "The audience always looked forward to the costumes that were sewn by my mom. Gowns were so expensive in Australia."

By 1964, Pilita had relocated back to Manila.

Months later, she made television history as the star of ABS-CBN's "An Evening With Pilita," a multi-awarded musical-variety show, a Thursday night top-rater that ran from 1965 to 1972.

With the late comedian Bert "Tawa" Marcelo, she hosted the amateur singing contest "Ang Bagong Kampeon" in the 1980s.

Her signature song and first local recording under Mareco/Villar, Alicia Gamilla's "A Million Thanks to You," was the theme song of "An Evening." The high-concept show featured the Wing Duo as regulars and Mitos Villareal as director. "Our director Mitos sang with the Wing Duo; they were called Lemons Three. We had a great band and the best musical directors like Emil Mijares and Doming Valdez."

It was on "An Evening" that an OPM classic made its debut. "I sang 'Kapantay ay Langit' for the first time there, but it was in English, and it was entitled 'You're All I Love.' George was my guest composer then."

Canseco was partly responsible for her title, Asia's Queen of Song.

"The Philippines had joined the Tokyo Music Festival for the first time in 1970. I interpreted George's

composition, 'My Daughter,' and won Best Singer," she recounted. Among those who competed was Olivia Newton-John.

By the time she got back in Manila, entertainment journalist Joe Quirino had coined the title Asia's Queen of Song for her.

Queen Pilita reigned not only in Asia and Australia, but also in Las Vegas and New York—having done shows at the Caesar's Palace and Carnegie Hall.

Sammy Davis Jr. himself brought Pilita to Las Vegas in the late 1970s.

"I was the front act for his shows at the Manila Hotel and Folk Arts Theater," she related. "Sammy promised he'd take me to Vegas."

At first, she thought it was just idle backstage chatter. "But he made good his promise and I worked with him for three weeks there. I've performed with many foreign artists, but Sammy was different. He was such a confident total performer. He even introduced me as the star of the show."

She headlined Carnegie thrice. "The first time was solo; then, with Basil Valdez and Ivy Violan; and the last time, with The Reycard Duet."

Nowadays, Pilita's vagabond shoes, as the song goes, are still "longing to stray."

If she's not cracking jokes on the GMA 7 sitcom "Lagot Ka... Isusumbong Kita," she's doing concerts near and far.

A performer's life, she attested, is spent mostly on the road. However, she has plenty of reasons to stay home these days.

With husband Carlos Lopez, she put up Pilita's restaurant/music bar beside Greenhills Theater. "It was formerly called Kooka Bar," she said, "but we now have our own concept."

It's a mini-shrine, commemorating Pilita's remarkable five-decade career. Old albums and pictures are displayed on the walls and 45 RPM records have been turned into napkin holders.

"This is where my family and friends come to unwind," she explained. "When I don't have work, I'm usually here, singing, chatting and jamming with friends like Nikki, Germs, Ivy, Dulce. My daughter Jacquilou Blanco and son Ramon Christopher Gutierrez and their children often drop by."

At Pilita's bar, Asia's Queen of Song is also the queen of the clan.



STROLLING down Pilita Street with Melbourne mayor in the '70s



WITH daughter Jacquilou Blanco



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WHEN A STRANGER CALLS

Jill Johnson, a young high school student who worked part-time as a babysitter, thought it's just going to be a quiet evening. Not until she answers a call from a mysterious person, who keeps on asking her, "Have you checked the children?" When the children are suddenly nowhere to be found, Jill gets more nervous when she realizes that the caller is also in the same house.

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A2-6

AUDREY Tautou

No special treatment for 'Da Vinci'

From page A2-1

good name and reputation of any person, whether living or dead"; and 8) if it "constitutes contempt of court or pertains to matters that are sub-judice in nature."

The MTRCB announcement came in the wake of a call from an antipornography group for the banning of the film, based on the best-selling book by Dan Brown.

The Philippine Alliance Against Pornography Inc. called "The Da Vinci Code" the "most pornographic and blasphemous film in history." The showing of the film, said PAAP spokesperson Also Filomeno, will "(cause a) break in the Christian faith around the world."

The group also called on the National Bureau of Investigation, Philippine National Police and Bureau of Customs to seize and destroy all of Dan Brown's books in local bookstores and declare the novelist a *persona non-grata*.

"The PAAP has always been a conservative group. I expected them to react the way they did," said Laguardia. "But we will stand by any decision the board makes."

"The Da Vinci Code" argues the divinity of Jesus Christ. It claims, among other things, that the Holy Grail is not a physical chalice, but Mary Magdalene, who allegedly carried Jesus' bloodline.

"The Board needs to watch the movie in its entirety to determine if there really is an attack on the Catholic Church," Laguardia stressed. "We are also considering the possibility that the film's director has a different take on the story, compared to the novelist's."

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THE FINAL SIX: Like brothers and sisters

'I'm sorry'

INQUIRER
EXCLUSIVE

Kellie Pickler is sent packing

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

HER LUCK RAN OUT.

On Wednesday (Thursday in Manila), "American Idol" finalist Kellie Pickler took her last bow on the show.

Right after host Ryan Seacrest announced the results, we could almost hear the 19-year-old blonde say, "I'm sorry..." as she had invariably done whenever she failed to impress the judges.

Famous for her "calamari" bit on one of the pre-performance videos, Kellie won the hearts of millions of Americans for her bubbly personality. Thanks to viewer-voting, she lasted in the competition long after critics thought she should have left.

Kellie said she saw it coming. "I deserved to be booted out this week," said Kellie in an exclusive interview (courtesy of StarWorld), saying that her performances these past two weeks had been below par.

On Tuesday night, the judges cut up her "robotic" rendition of "Unchained Melody."

Paula Abdul, usually the sympathetic one, told her, "I don't see you raising the bar each week. At this point it's about greatness, and I don't [get that from] you."

The ever cheerful Kellie pointed out, though, "Making it to Top 6 is not too shabby, isn't it?"

She said she was sad to leave the show, but at the same time eager to see what doors would open for her.

Already, there's good news. Kellie said that her father, who is serving time in a Florida jail, may be getting out soon. "In spite of everything that my dad and I have been through, I love him," she said.

As for her mom, the young lady from North Carolina says she's ready to forgive: "I think for so long, I had so many hard feelings for her. I think at this point... I have forgiven her."

The mother left before Kellie could even recognize her. Though she probably wouldn't know her mom if she saw her right now, Kellie said, "I sometimes wonder what she thinks of me... I don't know if she watches the show."

Some people say that your banter with the judges and with Ryan seems to be calculated rather than spontaneous. What do you have to say to that?

People are going to believe what they wanna believe. I've been real from the beginning, honest with my life and who I am. I don't have anything to hide or lie about.

Would you consider an acting career?

I would love to be on TV and film. I was actually in high school plays.

Do you regret any of your song choices?

No, I regret performances that I could have done better. But I can't change anything... I want to live for the future, not the past.

Who will you miss the most?

I can't say... I know I'm gonna miss them all so much—not only the contestants. I'm really gonna miss all the PAs (production assistants) and crew.

'I don't regret any of my song choices. I regret performances that I could have done better. But I can't do anything about that now. I want to live for the future, instead of the past'



KELLIE Pickler: Nothing to hide.

What was the hardest aspect of being on 'Idol'?

The hardest thing for me is not being able to catch up on sleep. Also, how some people can be very critical—it's probably the hardest thing in the entertainment world. I think that a lot of times people forget that we are human, too, and that we have feelings, and sometimes we get hurt.

How do you think the show has changed you?

I wouldn't say the show has changed me because I still feel like the same Kellie Pickler that I was when I first stepped into the audition. Although I feel like I've grown as a person and become more confident.

Would you do another reality show?

Yes, I would. It's fun because it's so easy to just be yourself. So as long as the reality show is really a reality show and not scripted, then I would.

Who do you think is gonna win this one?

You know what, I have no idea. It doesn't matter if you've never been in the bottom three. It doesn't matter if you have the most votes one week and the next. It's all about consistency. I think the top five this year is the best that the show has ever had.

How did you feel the next day when you woke up and realized you were no longer on "Idol"?

Happy. After the show we had a little dinner, kinda like a toast dinner. We just talked about good times. I'm happy for the people who are still on the show. We really love each other. I went into this as a noncompetitor. I was just trying to have some fun. I'm gonna miss all these guys.

There are rumors on the Internet... that you're dating Constantine Maroulis and/or Ace Young. Is there any truth to either of these?

So I date Ace now (laughs)? Constantine is a great guy. Ace is a great guy, too. But, in all honesty, no contestant is dating another contestant. It's kinda like gross because we're like brothers and sisters.

Can you talk about some things written about you that have hurt you the most?

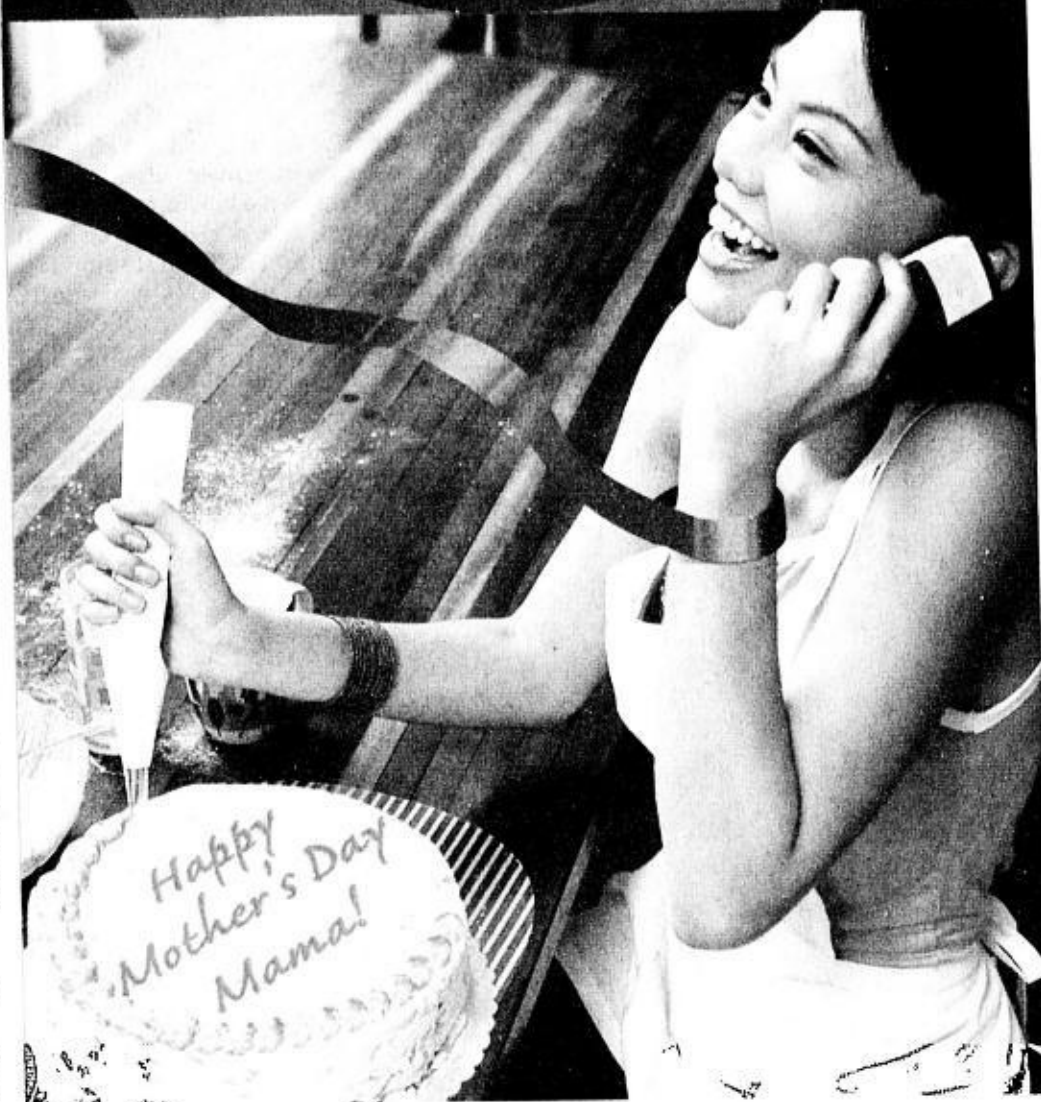
I think it's those that say I don't deserve to be here. There are even cases when I felt I'd really been made fun of. It's hard because you feel very excited that you're like, "Wow! I'm in a magazine." Then you read it and it's really bad. Those things hurt... a little bit.

What are your plans next week?

I'm booked for interviews for like a week and a half. They're flying me to New York Sunday. And you're gonna see me on all these shows that I never thought I would ever be on. I think I'm doing Jay Leno and Ellen Degeneres' show, which is my favorite show. They've got me really busy for the next week or two.

(Catch "American Idol" on Star World Wednesdays and Thursdays at 5 p.m. direct satellite, 8 p.m. primetime and 11:30 p.m. replay.)

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A2-8

ENTERTAINMENT

Nick on free TV

CRAMMED WITH KIDDIE FAVORITES LIKE "Spongebob SquarePants," "Blue's Clues" and "Dora the Explorer," ABC-5's Nick Block is being launched today.

Nick Block airs twice a day—6 to 9 a.m. and 2 to 4 p.m.—Mondays through Fridays. That's right, Nickelodeon—the world's most widely distributed kiddie channel, is now on free TV.

Said Christopher James, senior vice president and general manager of MTV Networks Asia: "We put kids first in everything we do. All our programs are safe, respectful, fun and imaginative in addition to being kids-tested and kids-approved. Parents need not worry because we've done all the worrying for them. We are delighted to be reaching 16 million more households in Philippines in this partnership with ABC-5."

Nickelodeon Asia is seen in more than 293,224,223 households throughout the

region with 24-hour channels and programming blocks. Territories include Bangladesh, Brunei, China, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand.

KID FIT

ABC 5 has always positioned itself as a proponent of child-friendly content. SVP for Corporate Affairs Terra Daffon, noted the fact that the network has consistently garnered the most number of Anak TV Seals, awarded annually by the Southeast Asian Foundation for Children's Television.

Daffon explained, "That's because we mostly chose children's programs that teach and mold in a fun way, which coincides with Nickelodeon's 'play to learn' philosophy."

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Angry stars

LOS ANGELES—HERE'S ONE sure way to incite Barbra Streisand's wrath: Write a book about her.

Christopher Anderson has learned that with his recently published biography, "Barbra: The Way She Is," Streisand has retaliated not with interviews or public statements, but by way of the Internet. On her website, she has issued a response she titles "Does the Truth Matter These Days?"

"Normally, I would not dignify vicious, mean-spirited mythology masquerading as biography," she begins. "But it seems this latest rehash of other unauthorized biographies is getting a lot of attention. Who is the person described in this book? This stereotypic image bears little resemblance to me or anything about me."

Streisand adds that none of her close friends or professional co-workers had been sources for the book. Indeed, her intimates, co-stars and major directors are missing from the author's account of contributors.

"A few of them spoke off the record," Anderson responded, talking from his Connecticut home. "Karl Malden and Estelle Parsons offered interesting insights, as did people who worked with her—singers, musicians, composers."

Streisand branded as "a lie" the book's allegation that she refused to attend her sister's wedding even though she was in the same city. "I was in London filming 'Yentl,'" she declared.

One small detail

The website also includes a letter from her sister Roslyn's ex-husband, Randy Stone, who said that Streisand provided her Malibu ranch for the wedding and gave the couple "a large gift of money" to start their married life.

Anderson remarked that the criticism concerned "one small detail."

"Barbra: The Way She Is" adds to the stream of unauthorized biographies about Streisand. In his list of sources, Anderson includes 27 biographies and other books relating to Streisand.

His book hit No. 15 on The New York Times list of best sellers on April 16. "That was after only four days on the market," says Anderson's public relations representative, Camille McDuffie.

Anderson has been a prolific biographer of celebrities. His 13 previous books include such titles as "American Evita: Hillary Clinton's Path to Power," "Sweet Caroline: Last Child of Camelot," "George and Laura: Portrait of an American Marriage" and "Citizen Jane."

The author, who devoted two years to the Streisand book, said he wasn't surprised by her reaction. "She made a statement years ago, 'If God wrote my biography, I wouldn't like it.' I'd like people to know that I am a fan of Barbra's," he said. "The first gift I gave my wife when we were students at UC Berkeley in the 1960s was the soundtrack album of 'Funny Girl.'"

50 Cent's worth

He usually saves his beefs for other rappers; this time, 50 Cent is going after Oprah Winfrey.

In an interview with The Associated Press, 50 complained that Winfrey rarely invites rappers on her talk show: "I think she caters to older white women."

"Oprah's audience is my audience's parents," the 29-year-old rapper said. "So, I could care less about Oprah or her show."

He's not alone in his resentment toward the talk show host cum media mogul.

Rapper-actor Ludacris, a.k.a. Chris Bridges, said in the May issue of GQ magazine that Winfrey was "unfair" during a show he appeared on last October with co-stars from best-picture Oscar winner "Crash."

"She edited out a lot of my comments while keeping her own in," he said. "Of course, it's her show, but we were doing a show on racial discrimination, and she gave me a hard time as a rapper, when I came on there as an actor."

Winfrey's representative at her production company, Harpo, told the AP that Winfrey was unavailable for comment.

But, as 50 Cent said, Winfrey's purported disapproval might enhance a rap star's street cred.

"I'm actually better off having friction with her," he said.

The crack-dealer-turned-rapper has sold millions of records gleefully flaunting his gangsta image, explicit lyrics and bullet-proof vest (he was famously shot nine times). He has his own record label, G-Unit, the G-Unit clothing line, his own sneaker line with Reebok and a videogame, "Bulletproof." **Bob Thomas and Erin Carlson, AP**

BARBRA Streisand



OPRAH Winfrey



Streisand
chides
biographer;
50 Cent
goes after
Oprah



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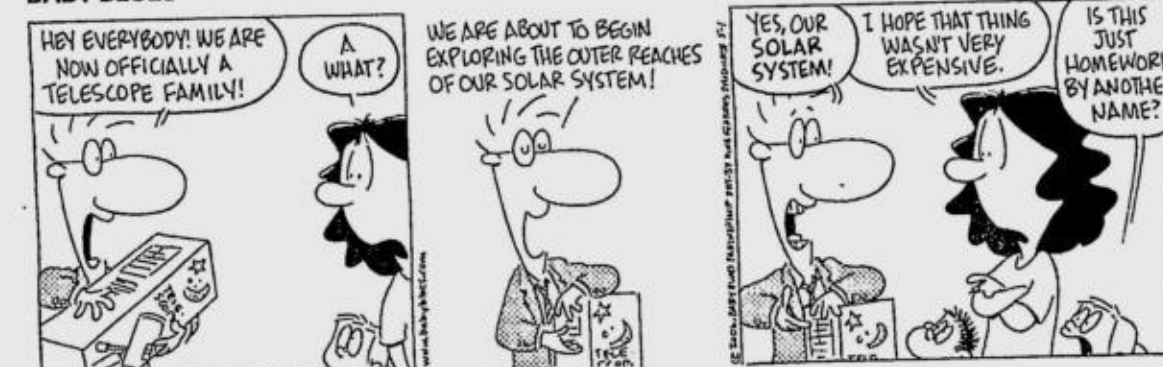
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PUGAD BABOY



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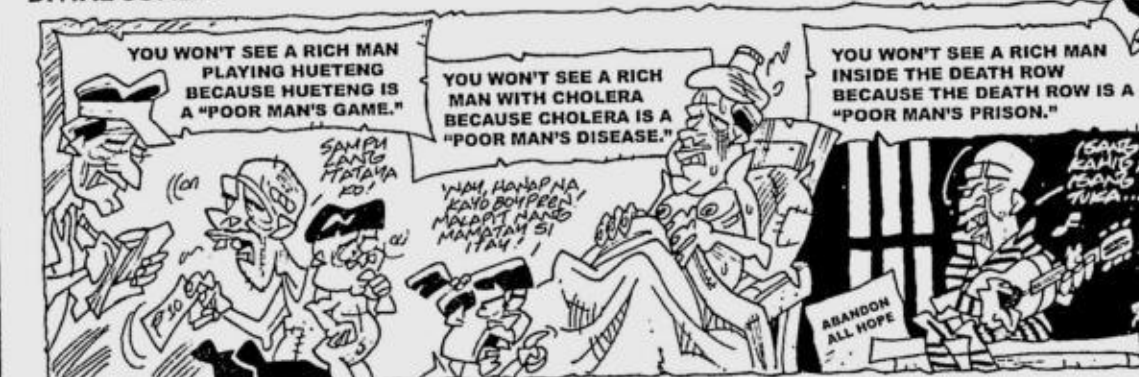
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BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY



BY STEVEN PABALINAS

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have high ideals about relationships. It might take a while to find true love. You're practical and astute. You like variety and change. Many of you are creative and musical. You're interested in philosophical subjects. Around the age of 50, you want to share your life deeply, emotionally with someone. Big changes are in the wind in this year!

Birthdate of: Tim McGraw, singer; Rita Coolidge, singer; Glenn Ford, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Home, family and domestic matters have your attention today. Discussions with parents could be significant. Take the time to listen to relatives and people you live with.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Attend to banking needs and stay on top of your bank account. Keep track of bills today. Figure out how much money you don't have. (Groan.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You need time alone today, if you can squeeze this into your schedule. You need rest. You can't be all things to all people all the time. Take a mental-health day.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a busy day! You're involved with errands, short trips and discussions with siblings and relatives. Business negotiations can go well. Make a point of being friendly with others.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today's Moon is in your sign. It will stay there until late Wednesday. Wheel! This is your time to make things go your way. You have an edge over everyone else!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Discussions with a friend, perhaps a female friend, are significant today. Be ready to listen. Alternatively, be ready to confide in someone.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Whatever you do today, there's a good likelihood that people will notice you for some reason. Therefore, dress accordingly. Look your best. You're in the lime-light!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Try to do something different and out of the ordinary today. You seek adventure. You want to learn more. You want to avoid routine and boring, humdrum repetition.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Talk about shared property, insurance matters, estates and the responsibilities you have for others. Someone might help you with these issues.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You will have to go more than halfway in important discussions with partners and close friends today. That's because the Moon is directly opposite your sign. Nevertheless, you can reach an agreement.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This week starts off with your desire to get more organized at work. You also want to get organized at home. You want to be productive, efficient and effective in everything you do. Yo!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Today's Moon is in Cancer, which is your fellow Water Sign. This bodes well for you. Much of this week is playful, romantic and creative!

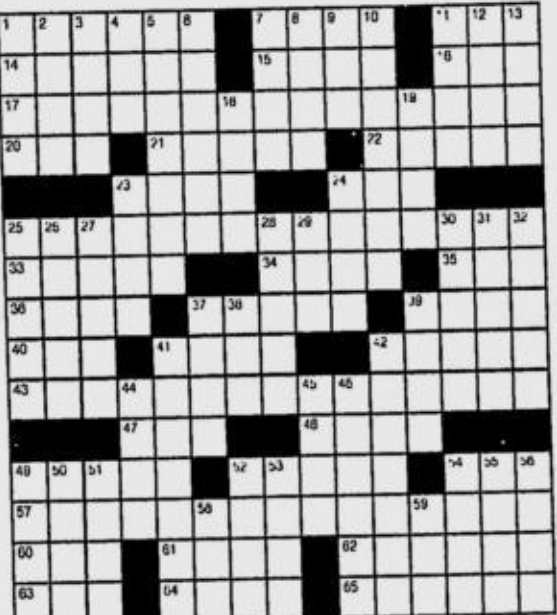
DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Naval engineer
- 7 Angel's prop
- 11 CPR specialist
- 14 Imbue with spiritual awareness
- 15 Banned spray
- 16 Old card game
- 17 Aiming high
- 20 Fla. neighbor
- 21 Compere
- 22 Ecuador's capital
- 23 Pesky insect
- 24 Group of GIs
- 25 Very rare event
- 33 English Channel port
- 34 Asian sea
- 35 Antonio, TX
- 36 Cries of discovery
- 37 More Immoral
- 39 Await action
- 40 Go bad
- 41 Shanker of the star
- 42 Eagle's pad
- 43 Zwieback, e.g.
- 47 Keats offering
- 48 Spoonful of medicine
- 49 Extrapolate
- 52 Toshiba rival
- 54 Actor Mineo
- 57 Hot sports ticket
- 60 Wolfed down
- 61 Thick piece
- 62 Smoothed
- 63 General Mills brand
- 64 To be, in Toulon
- 65 Sister of Venus

DOWN

- 1 Nintendo rival
- 2 Hydroxyl compound
- 3 Europe's neighbor
- 4 Nice good?
- 5 Wife of Napoleon III
- 6 Actress Jenna
- 7 Fabled dawdler
- 8 Der (Adenauer)



By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

5/1/06

Saturday's Puzzle Solved



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- 9 Fan noise
- 10 Hit film follow-up, perhaps
- 11 "The Time Machine" race
- 12 Drop feathers
- 13 Upstart
- 18 80-year-old prefix
- 19 Wind blast
- 23 Salon goops
- 24 In the distance
- 25 Eyeball-bending pictures
- 26 Never ever
- 27 Raccoon cousin
- 28 Corrective eye surgery
- 29 Hot temper
- 30 Grenoble's department
- 31 Passion
- 32 Wound up
- 37 Yankee Ruth
- 38 Ms. Gardner
- 39 Bardot's dad
- 41 Lancaster's emblem
- 42 Pardon
- 44 Vassar, since 1969
- 45 Millay of poetry
- 46 Arthur Conan and others
- 49 Author Dinesen
- 50 Don't look at me!
- 51 Bend
- 52 Certain twinkler
- 53 French priest
- 54 Reasonable
- 55 Revival shout
- 56 Swan lady
- 58 Most remote, briefly
- 59 Aus. neighbor

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

MIKROKOSMOS



BEN



BY DANIEL SHELTON

KIKO MACHINE



BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS



BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK



BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

'Idol' survivors down to five

LAST WEDNESDAY, THE SIX REMAINING survivors of "American Idol" did their best to measure up to the daunting demands of famous love songs made popular by some of the music world's finest talents. Alas, they didn't have an easy time of it.

As far as the studio audience was concerned, Katharine McPhee brought the house down with the evening's first musical performance, but the jurors generally pooh-poohed her best effort, saying it didn't match the original singer's (Whitney Houston's) achievement. Gee, thanks.

Elliott Yanin fared better, but Kelly Pickler stumbled badly with her cautious, listless performance.

Paris Bennett turned in "the evening's best female vocal," according to a judge, but heretofore consistent favorite Taylor Hicks lost his luster.

Pluckily enough, Chris Daughtry turned in the best performance, thus enabling the trouble round to end on a relative high.

But, make no mistake about it, the tilt's surviving finalists are feeling the squeeze and the heat. That's par for the course as the most-watched talent competition in the world hurtles to its "final-final" phase. And some of the tilt's best bets are waffling.

What's the problem? With the stakes now so high, they're trying very hard not to make mistakes—and that's turning out to be a mistake!

So, what's a finalist to do? If you go by the jurors' comments, they should forget that they have so much riding on surviving the tilt, and simply keep giving in the performances of their lives.

That isn't the easiest thing in the world to pull off, however, which is why former pacesetters Kelly and Taylor were hurting.

When push came to shove last Thursday, however, Taylor had a new lease on life, and it was Kelly Pickler who bit the dust.

That was just as shocking as Ace Young's ouster the week before. After all, some people had predicted that Kelly would reprise fellow folk singer Carrie Underwood's victory last year. Alas, it was not meant to be.

What's up for Kelly, now that she's the 2006 "AI's" latest dropout? Is everything over for her? Not likely. Look at Ace—he's no longer in the finals, but only a few days after his defeat, he was on the "Today" show and on Ellen DeGeneres's talk show.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre



That means the public and show producers are still interested in him, so his star could still rise despite his loss. The same could happen to Kelly, if she and her mentors play their cards right.

Now that the "AI" survivors have been trimmed down to five—Katharine, Chris, Taylor, Paris and Elliott, the tilt's stress level can only go even higher. In different ways, most of the five remaining finalists are deserving of victory in terms of talent, so the final decision is likely to be really close, and could depend on the prospective winner's grit and charisma, above all else.

Last Thursday, the top scorers were Chris and Katharine. Does that mean that the two of them will square off on the competition's final night? Not if Taylor, Elliott and Paris can help it, of course—but the signs are there for anyone to interpret, depending on his own best bet.

Feedback

From Maloli K. Espinosa, ABS-CBN's VP for government, corporate affairs and public relations: "Thank you for your feedback on 'Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition.' Comments from highly respected columnists like yourself are valued by the network as this gives us feedback on how best to improve our programs.

"We certainly agree that the batch of 'PBB' participants needs extra attention since it is comprised of teenagers. Please be assured that they have undergone and passed a series of exams that showed they are capable of handling the tasks inside the 'PBB' house.

"We would also like to inform you that, since we launched the first season of 'PBB,' we have we have employed the services of Dr. Randy Dellosa [as] resident psychiatrist who oversees the psychological wellbeing of the housemates. We hope you will continue giving us constructive insights about our show."



JARED Padalecki and JENSEN Ackles as Sam and Dean Winchester.

For TV series connoisseurs

PREMIERING THURSDAY, 10 PM. ON AXN IS "Supernatural," a compelling new series from the creator of "Buffy The Vampire Slayer," "Smallville" and "Charmed."

"Supernatural" is a gripping journey through the world of things beyond explanation.

Jared Padalecki ("Gilmore Girls") as Sam Winchester turns his back on a bright future as a lawyer to join his older brother Dean (Jensen Ackles, "Smallville") in a search for their father John (Jeffrey Dean Morgan, "Weeds").

John has spent his life hunting down the forces that had killed his wife. Crisscrossing the lonely back roads of the country in a '67 Chevy Impala, the brothers try to track him, running into supernatural evil along the way.

Following the pilot episode ("White Lady"), "Supernatural" airs Thursdays at 10. Warner Bros. Television presents the series in association with Wonderland Sound and Vision. Writers/executive producers are Eric Kripke ("Boogeyman") and Robert Singer ("Midnight Caller").

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3 SILENT HILL R13 10:30, 1:05, 3:40, 6:15, 8:50	4 THE WILD GP 10:40, 12:35, 2:30, 4:25, 6:20, 8:15, 10:10	5 SENTINEL PG13 10:30, 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10
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3 most popular shows in US are Fox network productions

NEW YORK—THE FOX NETWORK HAD THE three most popular programs on US television last week as broadcasters took a breath before the start of May ratings sweeps and the season's conclusion.

In anticipation of the upcoming ratings push, many of the most popular series were in reruns last week.

The two most popular shows: the week's two editions of "American Idol." Coming in third was the medical drama "House," which has grown nicely for the network this spring.

For the ninth straight week, Fox won among the 18-to-49-year-old demographic—a record for the network. It moved into a virtual tie with ABC for the season lead in that demo, which Fox won for the first time ever last season.

Fox will crown a new "American Idol" in May, sure to be a ratings winner. But ABC will compete hard, too, with an Oprah Winfrey special on 25 celebrated black women and season finales of "Grey's Anatomy," "Desperate Housewives" and "Lost."

May will also feature series finales for pop-

ular series like "The West Wing," "Will & Grace," "7th Heaven," "Alias," "That '70s Show" and "Malcolm in the Middle."

CBS is likely to finish the season as the ratings champ among all viewers, although its lead over second-place ABC is not as wide as it was last year. ABC is the only network up in viewers over last year. NBC appears doomed to repeat its fourth-place showing in both viewers and the young demo.

CBS averaged 11.9 million viewers for the week (7.8 rating, 13 share). Fox had 9.8 million viewers (6.1, 10), ABC 7.9 million (5.3, 9), NBC 7.1 million (4.7, 8).

A ratings point represents 1,102,000 households, or 1 percent of the nation's estimated 110.2 million TV homes. The share is the percentage of in-use televisions tuned to a given show. AP

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ENTERTAINMENT

Tame, tension-free trekking

By Oliver M. Pulumbait
Contributor

NO, YOU'RE NOT NOT seeing double. There are obvious similarities between Disney's new computer-animated feature "The Wild" and last year's "Madagascar" from Dreamworks. The concept and story details are uncannily alike, centering on domesticated zoo animals that leave their city homes, journey through the urban jungle, and end up trying to survive an actual, faraway one. But similarities or coincidences aside, "The Wild" is still hardly original, as it is also reminiscent of "Finding Nemo" and, in some respects, "The Lion King." It has

good animation going for it, which may keep kids from minding that it's actually quite dull, narrative-wise.

We see a rehash of the old problematic parent-child dynamic through lion characters Samson (voiced by Kiefer Sutherland) and Ryan (Greg Kinnear), where the young one feels insecure of his father's supposed accomplishments. When Ryan accidentally gets shipped off to parts unknown, Samson and his zoo posse embark on a daring rescue mission that could change their lives forever. This roster of odd animal characters includes dumb snake Larry (Richard Kind), grumpy koala Nigel (Eddie Izzard), kleptomaniac squirrel Benny (Jim Belushi), and image-conscious giraffe Bridget (Janeane Garofalo).

REVIEW

Each of them can be annoying and unbelievably bland, though. There are times that you just unconsciously tune them out and watch how cool the designs are, how detailed the animation.



Most of the animals look like semi-realistic stuffed toys, stylized enough so that they show imagination, but still possessing a tangible quality to their cuddly forms. The visuals have eye candy moments, among them the special effects used on the chameleon characters' color-changing abilities.

Beyond that, the story unfurls without memorable spectacle. After some eye-

rolling bickerings, a little toilet humor and a strange joke about Canada's "lax immigration policy," "The Wild" is pretty tame. The use of pop music makes it a little hip, as songs by bands Coldplay and Lifehouse flavor certain parts perfectly. But it's nowhere near the hip-ness of the "Shrek" movies' use of mostly contemporary music.

Adults can get bored for different

reasons, but the young ones can get distracted, mainly because of the engaging, colorful and lively imagery. The lessons here are recycled and nothing that the older, better animated features sneakily and cleverly taught children before. But the obvious ones are still there, if imparted formulaically, giving some meaning to this drawn-out, déjà vu safari adventure.

Pay taxes, Abba Bjorn told

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN—The Swedish tax authority is demanding nearly 87 million kronor (\$11.6 million) in back taxes, fees and interest rates from former ABBA member Bjorn Ulvaeus on royalties from the group's hits that it says he should have included in his tax returns.

According to the Swedish tax agency, Ulvaeus signed a series of contracts before moving to England in 1984. The contracts were meant to hand over the rights to his royalties from ABBA songs and the musical "Chess" to different companies.

SPIN CITY

But the agency claimed in a decision made in December that the deals were sham contracts and that Ulvaeus still had access to the money and should include them as his personal income.

"This has just been a construction to avoid taxes," agency spokesperson Jan-Erik Backman said. "The meaning [behind the contracts] are really something different than what the official papers say."

The ruling will be appealed, Ulvaeus lawyer Sven Rygaard said, adding, "I'm pretty sure we will win this."

Big Brother lowers the bar

By Paul Daza
Contributor

THE 12 TEENAGERS SELECTED FOR "Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition" ("PBBTE") are a telegenic, combustible bunch, ready to wage war in the name of conformity or individuality. Coming from backgrounds both socially and geographically diverse, each teen contestant is now out to win one million pesos cash, a condo unit, and other prizes, using strategies learned from the two previous seasons of the phenomenal fish bowl reality show.

Coming right after the original "Pinoy Big Brother" and its "Celebrity Edition" sequel, "PBBTE" may look like more of the same. But as any psychologist will tell you, the teenager—with his/her pent-up angst and compulsive desire to fall in love at the drop of a hat—may just be the most fascinating age bracket to be subjected to Big Brother's voyeuristic experiment. And it certainly won't hurt ABS-CBN's ratings, in view of the fact that young people make up the largest share of the TV-watching population today. The show has even been given an earlier time slot to allow more viewers to see it, right after "TV Patrol World."

What all this boils down to is perhaps the most fascinating and promising "PBB" variation yet, one that has all the scientific curiosity of a psychology experiment and the emotional nakedness of a religious retreat or bull session.

Indeed, the first week's episodes have already delivered on some aspects of this intrigue: a boy has revealed his feelings to his crush, and she says they can be friends (ouch!); a middle-class girl is treated like a pariah by the more economically challenged housemates; a shouting match has even erupted between two girls during a discussion about their parents. And as of this writing, one participant has volunteered to leave Kuya's house, negating the need for an eviction.

This early, some fans are already predicting that single mom Jamilla will win because she has the sympathy factor going for her. Like "PBB Celebrity Edition" winner Keanna Reeves, the attractive Jamilla appears to need the show's cash prize more than any other housemate. She has a two-year-old son who needs an operation, and she even worked as a GRO in a bar to make ends meet.

These obvious ploys to encourage conflict and promote sympathy aside, you get the



GERALD Anderson and Nina Jose

REVIEW

With so many impressionable youngsters watching, not to mention prudes ready to pounce, this latest edition has become a sanitized victim of the show's own success

feeling that the show's producers are holding back in terms of creating potentially controversial story lines. This might be because authorities in the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) and the Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) are intensely monitoring "PBBTE" to make sure that none of the housemates—some of whom are minors—is exploited. In a recent episode, the kids were made to dress up as red and black ants and wrestle in a gooey mix that looked like peanut butter. After the fight, the teens removed the headpieces and the bulky rear

ends of their costumes, revealing them to be wearing body-hugging tights underneath. But viewers were only allowed a second or two to see the teens in their revealing tights. Clearly, those behind the cameras don't want anyone complaining that the kids are being treated like sex objects.

Even the peanut butter wrestling was shown in a comical way, with the action being sped up or shown at normal speed to make it funny instead of sexually suggestive.

And oddly enough, after all the hype surrounding Rustom Padilla's "coming out" in PBB Celebrity Edition, and the debate about original "PBB" housemate Uma's sexual preference, there is now no mention of homosexuality among the house's current occupants. The most we've seen is a girl who acts tomboyish. (Hmmm...could lesbianism be this edition's surprise trump card?)

That's "Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition" for you. It's the most compulsively watchable show on primetime TV today, but it's probably the first time in Philippine television that the bar has actually been lowered instead of raised for a prime time show. With so many impressionable youngsters watching, not to mention prudes ready to pounce, "Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition" has now become a sanitized victim of its own success.

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Lose billions, get pay raise
/B3

Gov't asked to lower BIR's collection target for this year
/B4

BUSINESS

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Domestic output seen to grow 5% in 2006

BSP says inflation may average at 7.1% this year, lower than '05 level

By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY IS LIKELY TO POST A 5 PERCENT growth in domestic output this year, sustaining last year's GDP expansion of 5.1 percent, based on a Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas poll of 25 private analysts.

In its first quarter survey on gross do-

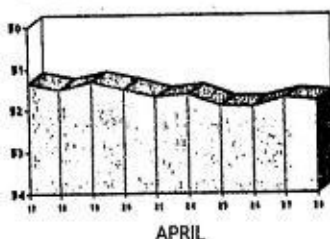
7.1 percent this year, lower than last year's 7.6 percent, on expectations of stable oil prices and continuing appreciation of the peso against the US dollar.

For next year, the survey indicated that the inflation rate could slow down to 5.8 percent, while the GDP growth rate could reach 4.9 percent.

The latest GDP growth forecast for this year is higher than the 4.8 percent median that came out in the last quarterly survey of the BSP, but it is still lower than the government's revised growth target range of 5.5 to 6.2 percent.

According to the BSP, analysts cit-

DOMESTIC/B2

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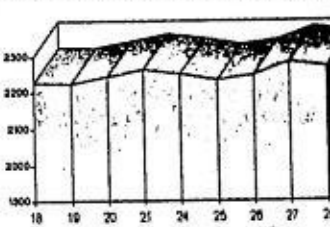
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As of 5 p.m., April 28, 2006

GOLD: \$638.30-638.80

per ounce Hong Kong, April 28, 2006

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B5)

Trading still seen upbeat

STOCK INVESTORS ARE EXPECTED TO continue tracking first quarter results when trading resumes this week.

"Earnings reports are slowly coming out with positive indications," AB Capital Securities wrote in a daily report.

The benchmark PSEI rose 7.5 points to 2,270.53 last week.

Last week, share prices also rebounded on news that the government has shelved plans to lift the value-added tax on oil to soften the impact of skyrocketing crude prices.

BPI Trade meanwhile expects a correction towards the end of the week.

"While buying sentiment remains strong, we may still see this correction continuing

TRADING/B2

Exporters gain edge in easier transfer of TCCs

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS RELAXED THE rules on the transferability of tax credit certificates held by distressed exporters, allowing the traders to address their liquidity problems by selling the TCCs to government financial institutions.

Ernesto Hiansen, head of the Department of Finance's duty and drawback center, told reporters that his office recently signed a memorandum of agreement with the Board of Investments to ease the rules on the transferability of TCCs.

Most exporters holding TCCs are registered with the BOI.

Under the Omnibus Investment Code, exporters are exempted from the value-added tax and duties imposed on the importation of raw materials and capital equipment. The exemption is an incentive to the traders' dollar contributions to the country.

But under the fiscal incentives system, exporters must first pay the taxes and duties every time they import. They are allowed to refund the tax and duty payments after they have actually exported the finished products that used the imported raw materials. This is to ensure that only exported products are covered by the tax and duty exemptions.

Exporters use the TCCs, issued by the duty and drawback center, to show that they are entitled to tax and duty refunds.

But claims for refunds usually take two to three months to process, and so exporters have been allowed to sell TCCs to immediately get cash.

Originally, a BOI-registered exporter can only sell TCCs to another BOI-registered firm with which it has trading relations. But recently, the BOI and the DOF's duty and drawback center have allowed distressed firms to sell TCCs to other BOI-registered companies even if the two firms do not have trading relations.

The BOI and the DOF unit further relaxed the rules when they agreed that distressed trading firms could sell their TCCs to government financial institutions.

The BOI is currently formulating the requirements before a company can be considered in distress. It said the parameters that would be used to define a "distressed company" should include the following: in-

EXPORTERS/B2

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Construction of coal-fired plant in Subic seen to lower Freeport power costs

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A 300-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Subic would help push power rates in the Freeport lower and nearer to the regional price benchmark that are attractive to investors.

Armand C. Arreza, administrator of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, said

electricity costs would also be lowered through a petition for a 35-centavo-per-kWh reduction in rate now pending with the Energy Regulatory Commission.

Arreza said the power rate in Subic could be slashed to as low as P5 a kWh, which would make it the cheapest in the country.

"But that would still be about 10 US cents, higher than the competitive benchmark of 7 cents for the region," Ar-

reza said.

Taiwan Cogeneration Corp.'s planned facility would mainly serve Subic locators—especially the Taiwanese firms at the Subic Bay Industrial Park—but it would also supply power to the grid.

SBMA earlier announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding with Taiwan Cogen covering the construction of the \$300-million power plant.

But Arreza said the entire project could cost about \$400 million.

"We need at least 180 MW of additional capacity," Arreza said. "We also need to lower power rates considerably because foreign investors are passing up on Subic in favor of other locations in the region with cheaper energy costs."

The official cited as examples four optical disc manufacturing companies

based in Taiwan, three of which ended up either in Thailand or Vietnam, where electricity costs 5 cents a kWh. The remaining firm is now having second thoughts about Subic.

Under the MOU that was signed last February, Taiwan Cogen would prepare a study on the power supply needs of about a thousand companies and establishments operating at the freeport zone.

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Napocor to cut use of Vis-Min oil-fired plants

State-run power firm to turn to cheaper hydro, geothermal resources in South

By Abigail L. Ho

THE STATE-RUN NATIONAL POWER Corp. aims to reduce its use of oil-fired power plants in the Visayas and Mindanao grids to single-digit levels—the same way it did to its oil-fed facilities in Luzon last year.

Napocor's bunker-based plants in 2005 accounted for only 2 percent of power generation in Luzon.

Napocor president Cyril del Callar said the high cost of fuel had prompted

the state firm to turn to power plants using indigenous fuels such as hydro and geothermal.

This enabled Napocor to cut the share of oil-based generation in Luzon to only 2 percent last year from 9.5 percent the previous year.

In the Visayas grid, oil-based plants accounted for only 14 percent of total generation in 2005, down from 19 percent the year before.

Del Callar said this could be attributed to the completion of the National Trans-

mission Corp.'s Leyte-Cebu line, which brought power from geothermal-rich Leyte to power-hungry parts of Visayas.

While Napocor was able to reduce the use of oil-based plants in Luzon and Visayas, it did not do as well in Mindanao, as bunker-based generation actually increased to 32 percent last year from 27 percent in 2004, Del Callar said.

"The reverse happened in Mindanao because it was dry season in the southern part (last year)," he said.

Del Callar said that, with the expected rainfall to be brought on by the La Niña weather disturbance this year, bunker-based generation in Mindanao would go back to around 27-28 percent.

Mindanao is heavily dependent on hydropower facilities for its power needs.

But by 2007, Mindanao will be in for a "paradigm shift" when a 200-megawatt coal-fired power plant on the island starts commercial operations, he said.

Trading still seen upbeat

From page B1

(this) week; particularly if shares of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. trade lower over the long holiday weekend," BPI Trade said.

BPI Trade said the market's support are at 2,270, 2,200, 2,172, 2,100. Resistance on the other hand may be at 2,270, 2,300 and then at 2,400.

Based on 2TradeAsia.com's roundup of corporate updates last week, companies that have announced their first quarter income include ABS-CBN Corp., which posted a turnaround in net profit to P121 million from a net loss of P114 million in the same quarter last year.

Manila Water Corp. of the Ayala Group said its net earnings grew 24 percent to P600 million in the first quarter

from P483 million in the same period last year.

Also, SM Investments Corp. said it was hiking its working capital budget for this year to P15 billion.

Meanwhile, Empire East Land Inc. said it bought back 800,000 common shares at 66.38 centavos a share as part of its buy-back program.

Banco de Oro Universal Bank (BDO) meanwhile said it was still keen on a merger with Equitable PCI Bank (EPCI), despite recent controversies. BDO believes the merger of both banks will be in the best interest of BDO and EPCI shareholders. BDO said it would wait for indications from the EPCI Bank board before making any move to amend its offer price.

eTelecare International

meanwhile is eyeing to list its shares at the Philippine Stock Exchange and the US technology-laced Nasdaq market later this year or early 2007. This was the latest statement from A. Soriano Corp. chief Andres Soriano III.

Construction firm DMCI Holdings Inc. has submitted a bid to the Power Asset and Liabilities Management for the 600-megawatt Batangas coal-fired thermal power plant in Calaca, Batangas.

San Miguel Corp. late last week said it would postpone its proposed offer of a rare type of shares and pursue an investigation on allegations from an anonymous letter sender claiming that one of its subsidiaries has overstated its sales. Elizabeth L. Sanchez



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Domestic output seen ...

From page B1

ed the following factors that led to the higher growth forecast: "Improved investor confidence due to fiscal performance; additional room for government spending on key areas such as infrastructure; continued strength in the services sector, and recovery in agricultural output."

The most optimistic projection on domestic output for this year was made by Forecast Singapore, which indicated a 5.9 percent outlook. The lowest forecast was made by British Bank HSBC, which expected growth to hit 4.3 percent.

For 2007, the highest GDP growth projection was given by AB Capital Securities, with 6.1 percent. The lowest was made by Credit Lyonnais, with 2.8 percent.

Other institutions included in the survey were ABN-Amro, ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Banco de Oro Universal Bank, Bank of America, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Business Monitor International, Citigroup, Deutsche Bank, Development Bank of Singapore, Economist Intelligence Unit, IDEA, ING Bank, Land Bank of the Philippines, Macquarie Bank Ltd., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Multinational Investment Bank, Philippine Equity Partners, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Standard Chartered

Bank, UBS Warburg and Wallace Business Forum.

On inflation, the consensus forecast for this year was slightly lower than the 7.2 percent indicated in the BSP's previous survey. The private analysts cited the limited impact of the reformed value-added tax as manufacturers continued to absorb the burden of higher input costs.

"At the same time, some economists pointed out the potential inflation risks from global crude oil prices and the effects of the mild La Niña episode on food prices," the BSP reported.

The consensus for this year was even lower than the government's forecast range of 7.3 to 7.9 percent.

The government has conceded that the 4-5 percent official inflation target for this year may be reached, but the same target range may also be met next year.

Oil prices are seen to constitute the dominant risk affecting the outlook on prices.

Also seen as a major risk by the BSP was the pending adjustment in domestic power transmission charges, which imply eventual increases in energy costs at the retail level.

Other potential sources of price pressures on the supply side include the La Niña weather disturbance, which could disrupt crop production, and the threat of the Avian Flu virus.

Exporters gain edge ...

From page B1

ternal rate of return, a negative or declining balance of trade,

and level of technology.

To encourage buyers of TCCs, the cred-

it certificates are often sold at a discount.

Hansen said that allowing exporters to sell TCCs to government financial institutions therefore would also benefit the government.

He admitted though that there have been a declining number of TCC transfers since the tax credit scam that happened in the late 1990s.

The government and some traders fell prey to the scam that involved the sale of fake or fraudulently secured TCCs.



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RANK-AND-FILE EMPLOYEES who fail to make their quotas get dismissed.

Over at the Export and Industry Bank, the top six officers even expect to receive a 7.4-percent salary increase this year, despite the bank last year posting a P1.635-billion loss, wiping out 30 percent of the bank's capital stock.

The compensation package for the top six officers—the bank did not identify them, but apparently these include chair Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. and president Benjamin Castillo—will this year be boosted to P105.59 million, from P98.3 million in 2004, when the bank posted P95.33 million in net income.

Ortiz-Luis could very well override any boardroom objection to the pay increase, for he himself controls the single biggest block, by virtue of a voting trust for a 22.32-percent unnamed shareholder interest, as well as another 12.76-percent block in the name of the Philippine Exporters Confederation.

To be fair, the 2006 executive compensation package is about P5 million less than the 2004 package of P110.3 million.

But, then again, this year's executive pay raises come on top of the P3-billion fresh capital pumped in by existing and new shareholders, as well as another P7 billion in "soft" loan extended by the government to improve the bank's financial ratios.

The bank found a sympathetic ear in Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. for the P7-billion assistance, whose president, Ricardo Tan, was an Export Bank consultant before his PDIC appointment.

Apparently, because of the bank's changed shareholder composition, a low-intensity proxy solicitation campaign is now being waged for the bank's May 26 shareholders' meeting.

A total of 25 nominees are vying for the 15-member board.

The 25 include an American, Josue Camba Jr.; a former executive director of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Albert Cheok; and Ms Excitement herself, stockbroker Vivian Yuchengco.

Disadvantaged CEO

UNLIKE their Export Bank counterparts, the top executives of the similarly-listed iVantage financial

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

holdings and IT-investment company have received no salary increases in the past three years.

In fact, the top officers receive no salary at all. Chair and CEO Roberto Lorayes last year received the grand sum of P36,000 in per diem for attending board meetings.

His president and COO, Ignacio Gimenez, and treasurer/CFO, Valentino Sy, also received the same amount.

But, then again, the three officers not only co-own the company, they also have independent sources of income.

According to the grapevine, iVantage

expects to make a turnaround this year, after losing P122.86 million in 2004.

Saludo gets congressional prerogative

FORMER Southern Leyte Rep. Aniceto "Dong" Saludo Jr. has been upheld by the Supreme Court in filing the damage suit against the American Express Bank right in Saludo's congressional district, not in his stated Pasay City address.

Saludo filed the civil suit after his Amex card was declined in Tokyo in April 2000 during an official House trip.

Likewise, a supplementary card issued to his daughter was similarly declined in the United States. In declining the card, Amex claimed that Saludo had failed to pay the previous month's balance. Saludo, for his part, claimed that he had failed to receive the Amex monthly statement.

Amid the recriminations, Amex cancelled the two credit cards three months later. Citing the Pasay address in Saludo's *cedula*, Amex elevated the case to the Court of Appeals, which ordered Maasin Regional Trial Court Judge Romeo Gomez to stop hearing the case because Maasin was the wrong venue.

Amex had hoped that the case would be heard in either Makati, where Amex Philippines holds offices.

COCKTALES/B5

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Gov't asked to lower BIR collection target for this year

Impact of mitigating measures underestimated

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE wants its revenue collection target for this year lowered, saying the P675 billion that it was tasked to collect was too high and was based on wrong estimates.

In a letter to the Department of Finance, its head agency, the BIR said the DOF underestimated the revenue impact of the measures recently implemented to mitigate the impact of the Value Added Tax Reform Law.

The government has estimated that the VAT law would generate P75 billion in additional revenues this year, of which the BIR would account for about P30 billion while the rest would be contributed by the Bureau of Customs.

The said law expanded the coverage of the value-added tax in November last year and raised the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent in February this year. Previously exempted products and services, such as oil, electricity, and medical and legal services, are now covered by VAT.

To ease the impact of the tax measure, the government implemented several relief measures. These include the reduction in the excise tax rates on oil products and the lifting of franchise tax on electric distribution firms.

The government also reduced the tariff rates on imported petroleum products from 5 to 3 percent. Economic managers recently agreed to further lower the tariff rate to zero in view of the continued escalation of oil prices in the world market.

The BIR said that with the implementation of the mitigating measures, its revenue collection target should be lowered by P6.39 billion. In effect, the BIR wants the national government to reduce its revenue collection target for this year to P668.6 billion.

The revenue agency likewise pointed out that the DOF failed to take into consideration the input VAT credits that VAT-registered taxpayers claim. These input tax credits trim the total liabilities of the taxpayers, the BIR said.

The BIR's P675-billion collection goal for 2006 was made in line with the national government's agenda of reducing the budget deficit from P146.8 billion last year to only P125 billion this year and eventually to zero by 2008.

The BIR is the biggest revenue source of the national government, accounting for more than 60 percent of the total.

Instead of meeting Azurin head on, Lambino says, "The coalition of executive and legislative powers under a parliamentary regime is precisely what we are after because it will eliminate gridlock not only in legislation, but also execution."

The hundreds of bills approved by the House to change the names of schools, streets and esteros cause the gridlock. This logjam can be solved without changing the form of government.

Lambino does not explain how a parliamentary system guarantees prompt execution of government plans.

He goes on, "This dynamic quality will ensure that new responsive and relevant legislation will be passed quickly, and prompt execution is guaranteed." Why should legislation be passed quickly? If a proposed law is new, responsive and relevant, it should be enacted slowly and deliberately—and with the help of the Senate.

Then, Lambino turns ecstatic: "Once the prime minister and the Cabinet are performing adequately, their colleagues in parliament may remove them. If and when the parliament is uncooperative, then the prime minister may revamp parliament and call for new elections. This is how parliamentary systems work in dozens of highly successful and developed countries. This is precisely the beauty of the parliamentary system that has been doing wonders for some of the world's most progressive countries—most of Europe, Japan, Australia, Canada, to name a few."

If it is easy to get rid of a bad prime minister by means of the confidence vote, it is just as easy to get rid of a good one.

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Lambino's parliament

RAUL LAMBINO, WHO SPEARS the people's initiative to shift to the parliamentary form of government (I wonder where he gets the money for the newspaper ads of Sigaw ng Bayan), e-mailed me his April 23 press release.

Lambino's views on the parliamentary system are inaccurate and outdated.

His fellow constitutional commissioner Rene Azurin had said that those proposing a parliamentary shift "do not tell the people that the fusion of executive and legislative powers—the distinguishing feature of a parliamentary system—means that the same set of people who choose the programs of government, appropriate funds for these programs and execute these programs."

(By the way, I totally agree with Azurin—please see my Jan. 24 column.)

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QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General



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Furniture exports up 3.3% in 2005

REVENUE FROM FURNITURE EXPORTS reached \$303.8 million last year, up 3.3 percent from about \$295 million in 2004, the Department of Trade and Industry said.

Of last year's earnings, 68 percent accounted for shipments to the United States. Japan absorbed 4 percent of the total while 2 percent went to Great Britain.

Also, the DTI said 7.6 percent of the amount represented products from Cebu-based Dedon Manufacturing Inc., which produces aluminum furniture.

According to the Philippine Trade and Investment Center in Berlin, parent firm Dedon GmbH would continue expanding its operation in the Philippines and has earmarked \$5 million for capital outlay for the next three years.

Dedon's performance was hailed as a successful synergy between Philippine craftsmanship and German technology.

Trade Secretary Peter B. Pavila said the partnership not only contributed significant dollar earnings but growth for Cebu and employment for Cebuanos.

The company, which was established in 2000 with an initial capital investment of P14.3 million, now has a workforce of 2,730. This is expected to reach 3,000 by year-end.

"We consider the employees our partners because we associate them to the company's success," said Dedon president Herve Lambert.

He said the parent firm chose to invest in Cebu due to the province's reputation as the Mecca of traditional basket weaving.

Dedon's furniture design begins with the material called Hularo fiber—a synthetic material developed and produced in Germany—which is then hand-woven into furniture in Cebu.

Ronnel W. Domingo



IP PHILIPPINES' TM ONLINE

The Intellectual

Savings put in investments down

More money deposited in banks or sent, spent abroad

By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE PHILIPPINES' NATIONAL SAVINGS RATE IS increasing but the portion of savings placed in investments is dwindling.

In a speech during the recent national convention of local government units' budget officers, Monetary Board member and former Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong warned that the country might be seeing the start of a capital flight.

She noted that the national savings rate or the amount of income that was being saved accounted for 27.5 percent of gross domestic product in 2004 and 27.8 percent in 2005.

"This is very encouraging because there was a time when our savings rate was much lower," Amatong said. She, however, added that the portion of GDP that went to investments stood at only 17.1 percent in 2004 and 15.7 percent in 2005.

"While we as a nation have saved more, the amount of savings put into investments was less," Amatong said.

"The pertinent question is where were the savings going if not invested? The answer: They are either put in banks as deposits or kept under our beds or are sent abroad to be spent there or a combination of these," Amatong said.

"Our investments as a percentage of GDP is low and that means that we are not investing enough in infrastructure or other projects to raise our capital stock," she said.

Taking a closer look at the finances of all LGUs excluding barangays, Amatong said the bulk of income was coming from internal revenue allotment at about 65 percent in 2004 while locally generated income represented only 32 percent.

She said provinces were noted to be heavily dependent on IRA and other transfers from the national government to the tune of 82 percent, while locally generated receipts accounted for only 15 percent in 2004.

For cities, the ratios were better because IRA and government transfers accounted for 44 percent while locally generated funds accounted for 52 percent.

Municipalities were 78 percent dependent on government transfers and only 20 percent self-generating.

"The only sustainable source of financing for local governments is locally or internally generated resources. It is, thus, important that this source of financing be carefully engineered, structured and administered," Amatong said.

All work and no pay

LABOR DAY IS SUPPOSED TO BE a day in celebration of workers worldwide—unless you happen to be a worker who can't find a job. If you don't need a job or are not looking for one, that's fine; you're not counted as a member of the labor force.

If you're working but your job isn't quite enough to meet your needs, then you wouldn't be in much of a celebrating mood either. You would be what the statistics refer to as being underemployed.

Rising incidence

What is most disturbing about the most recent employment statistics is that there has been a dramatic rise in the proportion of our workers who are underemployed. Their number has jumped by close to 2 million, from 5.1 million last year to 6.9 million as of last count (January 2006). As a percentage of total employed workers, they had gone up from 16.1 to 21.3 percent.

This puts a major damper on the seemingly good news that the unemployment rate had dropped from 11.3 percent last year to 10.7 percent this year. The number of jobs may have increased, but the quality of those jobs had gotten worse—much worse, in fact. We'll say more on job quality below.

Part time work

There are two kinds of underemployed workers: Those who are visibly underemployed and those who are invisibly so. The visibly underemployed are not working a full 40 hours a week or 8 hours a day, or working only part time and wanting to work more if possible. But some may already be working full time but want, or need, more work. Their full time jobs may not be enough to make ends meet for their families. Of course, some full-time workers may want more work not because they cannot make ends meet, but because they want

No FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito



something better than simply making ends meet.

The bad news is that visible underemployment has been steadily rising over the years. In 1997, a little less than half of the total underemployed (2.8 million out of 5.8 million) were only working part time. In 2002, this share was up to two-thirds (3.3 million out of 5.1 million). Now, over 4 million Filipino workers are visibly underemployed, making up about three out of five of the total underemployed. What this simply means is that a lot of the new jobs are really part time and seasonal jobs, much of it (i.e. about half) in the farm sector.

Unpaid work

A closer look at the published statistics tells us what's really going on. There were 750,000 new jobs created between January 2005 and January 2006, according to data from the National Statistics Office. There are at least two things that are disturbing about this statistic. First, about a million new workers join our labor force every year, which means the new jobs created failed to even catch up with the new job-seekers.

Second, of the 750,000 new jobs created, more than half (389,000 or 52 percent) were in the form of unpaid family workers. Only 98,000 new wage-paying jobs were generated, while the self-employed took up the rest. In contrast, just a year before, unpaid family work made up only 42 percent of the new jobs created. What good are new jobs, whether full-time or part-time, if they don't pay the worker anything? To mur-

der an old saying, all work and no pay makes Juan dirt poor.

Getting serious

All this is happening while the economy is supposedly growing at more than 5 percent. Clearly, our economy is not growing the right way. We need the jobs where the jobless are. It was quite an insult when someone in government recently declared that the reason there's so much unemployment is that Filipino workers are too choosy. Surely, trained schoolteachers who settle for domestic jobs abroad or even here at home (I know at least one myself) are not being choosy.

On the contrary, the reason there's so much unemployment and underemployment is that the strategies to achieve growth in GDP and to achieve growth in jobs are not integrated together, as if these were two separate concerns. We produce growth by fostering high-visibility enterprises that give few jobs, and then produce jobs by paying thousands of people to wear blue shirts with someone's name and pretend to keep the highways clean. What about getting serious about the sector that accounts for 12 million jobs, and could easily account for so much more—the agriculture sector? What about having hundreds of millions of pesos meant for fertilizers really spent for fertilizers, for example?

I realize workers, and more especially involuntary non-workers, don't have much to celebrate about—but happy Labor Day, nonetheless.

Fuchsia, not fuschia

I misspelled the word "fuchsia" last week, but I'll bet a few of you even noticed. If so few of us can really spell fuchsia properly, how can you fault Erap for preferring red?

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

GMA Q1 income down to P362M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

BROADCASTING FIRM GMA Network Inc.'s income in the first quarter dropped slightly to P362 million from P400 million in the same period last year.

The slight reduction was attributed to an industry-wide reduction in advertising revenues.

Consolidated gross revenues grew to P2.3 billion for the first three months, 19 percent higher than its P1.9 billion in revenues for the same period last year.

Operating expenses, however, jumped 43 percent to P1.3 billion in the first quarter, primarily due to higher production costs and in-

creased salaries.

The network is producing another primetime "telefantasya," Captain Barbell, and is currently airing a primetime program, Majika.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (Ebitda) rose 2 percent to P786 million for the first three months. Despite the industry challenges, GMA 7 managed to grab top spot in the ratings game.

As of March this year, GMA 7 has maintained its lead in both Metro Manila and Mega Manila TV ratings, including the highly contested primetime block.

Data from AGBNMR placed

GMA 7's rating at 18.3 percent, versus 13.1 percent for rival ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.

AGBNMR data also showed that as of March this year, 21 of the top 30 TV programs were from GMA 7, including the top six slots.

GMA 7 also expanded its lead in the primetime block last March, posting an average rating of 26.1 percent against its rival's 20.6 percent.

Its free QTV Channel 11 also maintained its hold on the number three spot as of March.

On regional programming, the company continues its aggressive promotions in key cities, including Cebu, Davao and Iloilo.

Smart sets rates for 3G service launch

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST WIRELESS network will officially launch commercial operations of its third-generation (3G) mobile phone network after offering free video calling and video streaming services for two months.

In a statement, Smart Communications Inc. said the service would include "new and expanded" 3G service offerings, which was supported by an extensive nationwide network ready for High Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA) technology.

"Starting May 1, Smart postpaid and pre-paid subscribers with 3G-capable handsets will enjoy enhanced applications and extensive rich media content on a commercial basis," the company said. "These include live TV streaming of two major television networks and 3G downloads of full music tracks and video clips."

Under the introductory pricing scheme that would take effect today, Smart 3G rates were aligned with existing second-generation rates, while some services will remain free of charge.

For video calling, Smart-to-Smart local 3G video calls remain free of charge. Smart's 3G customers can also make international video calls for the price of a regular IDD call at \$0.40 a minute to eight 3G operators in six countries.

These include NTT DoCoMo in Japan, CSL, Smartone and Hutchison in Hong Kong, Starhub in Singapore, Chunghwa in Taiwan, Vodafone in Germany and Mobilkom in Austria.

Meanwhile, video calling on international roaming will remain the same as international roaming voice rates for both outbound and inbound roamers.

For Video and audio streaming, all Smart

3G video and audio streaming applications—including live TV viewing—will be charged a P15 access fee for every 30 minutes based on running time that starts when a subscriber clicks on a streaming link regardless of the number of videos viewed.

Aside from the access charge, there will be a separate fee for content.

Smart 3G subscribers can watch GMA 7 and ABS-CBN 2 live via video streaming. Subscription fee for each network is P20 a day. 3G streaming of audio and video clips will be charged P5 a hit.

However, streaming of movie trailers, live traffic and summer hotspots cameras and music videos will be free of charge.

For Multimedia Messaging or MMS, rates across all Smart subscribers have been set at P1 a message for Smart-to-Smart messages and P2 an MMS for Smart to other operators. The previous rate for MMS was P5 a send.

For Internet browsing and WAP browsing using GPRS and 3G, the rate will be set at P10 for every 30 minutes, regardless of the file size downloaded.

The charge applies to browsing Internet sites outside of the free Smart WAP site whether connected via GPRS or 3G.

For downloading Smart 3G content such as video clips, ringtones, visual ringtones, and games, the introductory rates range from P20 for a video clip download to P50 for a full music track and a premium game.

Downloading of preview clips will be free of charge.

For postpaid subscribers, all introductory 3G rates are part of their consumable plans. Corporate accounts have the option to use the introductory pricing or retain their current data consumption rate based on their contracts.

Smart currently has approximately 250,000 subscribers with 3G-capable handsets.

Cocktales

From page B3

face, or in Pasay City, the stated office address/residence of Saludo in his community tax certificate.

The CA decision prompted Supreme Court Justice Romeo Callejo Sr. to give an extended lecture to CA Justices Renato Dacudao (the ponente), Gorardo Jacinto and Rodrigo Cosico on the distinction between residence and domicile.

"A man can have but one domicile for one and the same purpose at any time, but he may have numerous places of residence," Callejo said, adding that the CA justices had cited the wrong jurisprudence for their wrong-venue ruling.

"Absent any evidence to the contrary, he (Saludo) is deemed to possess the qualifications of the said position (congressman of Southern Leyte), including that he was a resident therein" at the time of the filing of the case.

It is not clear whether Amex would still appeal the decision to the Supreme Court en banc, but Callejo belongs to the First Division, chaired by no less than Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, who concurred in Callejo's decision.

Heard through the grapevine

MALABON Vice Mayor Arnold Vicencio has been slapped with a "dead-beat dad" suit by his former wife Ardel Dionisio for his alleged failure to provide P5,000 monthly support for their minor child, despite a 2003 court order from Malabon RTC Judge Emmanuel Laurela.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pltdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE					
(As of April 28, 2006)					
STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL BANKS					
Abacus Bank Inc.	4.6	5	4.6	5	323,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	35.5	35.5	35	35.5	1,155,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	61.5	62	61	61	1,258,500
Chinairust Comm. Bank	19	19	19	19	100
Citizens Savings Bank	19.75	20.25	19.75	20.25	3,090,000
Equitable Bank Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.39	0.41	158,800
International Exch. Bank	71.5	71.5	71	71.5	99,600
Manila Electric Co. A	33	34.5	33	34.5	853,900
Manila Electric Co. B	38.5	39	38.5	39	1,100
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	35	35	35	35	2,300
Phil. Bank of Comm. B	38	40	37	40	6,300
Phil. Savings Bank	46.5	49	46.5	49	118,800
Security Bank Corp.	38	38	38	38	100
Union Bank of the Phil.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	20,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.49	0.5	0.49	0.5	460,000
First Abacus Financial	30	30	30	30	10,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	3340	3350	3340	3350	260,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	200	210	200	210	7,780
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2180	2180	2180	2180	20
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	1.1	1.22	1.1	1.22	28,298,000
Investment Corp.					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	43.5	44.5	43.5	44.5	116,500
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	13	706,100
Manila Electric Co. A	18.75	18.75	18.25	18.5	1,400
Manila Electric Co. B	6.3	6.6	6.4	6.5	1,122,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	3,494,000
Palayan Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	9,076,000
TransAsia Oil and Energy	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	190,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.28	2.28	23,000
CADP Group Corp.	20.75	21	20.75	21	764,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	35.5	35.5	35	35.5	5,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	156,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	360,000
RFM Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	30,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	5,471,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63.5	64	63	64	160,000
San Miguel Corp. B	80.5	80.5	80	80	360,500
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	239,900
Universal Robina Corp.	22	22.5	22	22.5	2,389,500
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	1,800,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.48	1,837,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.95	0.98	0.95	0.98	1,300,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	791,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Active Alliance Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	560,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	400,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	500,000
Stenial Manufacturing	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.53	30,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	30,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	20,000,000
Ayala Corp.	360	362.5	360	360	2,910
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	270,000
Abacus Equity Ventures	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	311,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	3,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.7	329,000
APC Group Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	5,000,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	2,290,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.93	0.94	15,000
ATR Holdings Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	15,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	15,000
Bayanotons Cons Indus Inc.	9	9.1	9	9.1	1,730,000
Benjares Holdings Corp.	0.95	0.96	0.95	0.95	3,404,000
CMCI Holdings Inc.	4.1	4.1	4	4.1	1,231,000
Firstview Dev. Corp.	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3	600
Global Business Hldgs Inc.	47	48	47	48	43,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.38	1.42	1.38	1.42	2,914,000
JG Summit Holdings Inc.	0.205	0.21	0.2	0.21	1,180,000
Mexico Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.225	0.23	0.225	0.225	1,100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	5,320,000
Sinopharm Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	122,600
SM Investments Corp.	238	238	230	230	2,120,000
Seafarm Resources Corp.	0.67	0.67	0.66	0.66	30,400,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.065	0.0675	0.065	0.0675	2,060,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.12	0.12	
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	12.5	12.5	11.75	11.75	6,397,800
Arangia Properties Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.36	300,000
Belle Corp.	1.22	1.24	1.22	1.22	5,236,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	4,200,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	3,589,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1,000
Cebu Prop. Vnt. A	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.205	4,360,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.66	12,500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.66	70,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	1,000,000
Ever-Goteco Resources	1.36	1.42	1.36	1.4	35,863,000

Guimaras mangoes' prospects turning sour

Mindanao fisheries sector up

DAVAO CITY—MINDANAO'S FISHERIES sector grew 3.83 percent in 2005, according to data from the Mindanao Economic Development Council.

Medco data showed that the island's fish production in 2005 reached 1,763.1 metric tons, up from 1,698 metric tons the previous year.

Medco said aquaculture production posted the biggest increase of 6.7 percent from 765.9 metric tons in 2004 to 817.3 metric tons in 2005.

Among the regions, Western Mindanao covering Zamboanga, Pagadian and Dipolog cities posted the biggest increase of 11.45 percent, followed by the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) at 5.82 percent.

Medco said the double-digit increase in commercial and aquaculture production triggered the impressive growth of the economy of Western Mindanao.

Central Mindanao, meanwhile, covering Cotabato and General Santos cities, registered the biggest decline of 11.93 percent because of the cut in commercial fish production.

As this developed, Medco said Mindanao's share in the country's poultry production also increased to 20.45 percent in 2005.

From 231,512 metric tons in 2004, the island's chicken production rose to 241,429 metric tons.

"The upward trend in the chicken production pulled the overall poultry production in Mindanao to a positive growth rate of 3.49 percent higher than the 1.38 national growth rate in poultry production," Medco said.

Southern Mindanao and Northern Mindanao were the biggest contributors in the island's growth in poultry production at 21.91 percent and 13.10 percent, respectively.

But Medco noted that while chicken production continued to be in the uptrend, duck production in the island declined by 8.93 percent. **Judy Quiros, PDI Mindanao Bureau**

Production problems top list of industry's woes; mango congress set

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—THE WOES OF THE local mango industry could turn it sour.

Saying that their claim to fame of having the sweetest and pest-free mangoes is not enough, agriculture officials and mango growers in Guimaras and Iloilo are now looking at ways to improve production volume to meet demand.

Iloilo used to be among the top four producers of the country, but it has slid to 8th place.

Guimaras is the only source of Philippine mangoes exported to the United States, but

is not on the list of top mango producers.

Pangasinan is the top producer of mangoes in the country at 300,000 metric tons a year.

Iloilo only produces 30,000 metric tons of mangoes a year.

Iloilo mangoes are produced mainly by small farmers. It was only recently that mango plantations started being developed, mostly in northern Iloilo.

In the southern part of the provinces where the soil and climate are suitable for mango growing, mango producers rely on small farmers with one or two trees each.

Guimaras production is only between 10,000 to 11,000 metric tons a year, but

the province is the envy of Iloilo because its mangoes meet the standards of the United States and Australia.

Last year, Guimaras exported to the United States and Australia some 500 metric tons valued at P38 to P40 a kilo, up from 311 metric tons at P28 a kilo in 2004.

Guimaras mangoes sell for \$2 each in the United States.

The Philippines total export of fresh and processed mangoes in 2005 totaled \$36 million, of which \$26 million came from the sale of fresh mangoes.

The major markets for mangoes include the United States, Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea and China.

In anticipation of further growth in demand, agriculture officials in Guimaras are now working to increase production.

Representatives from the Iloilo Mango Growers Cooperative (IMGC) said the challenge was how to expand the combine 2,300 hectares planted to mangoes to meet the foreign demand.

The 32-member cooperative was organized only last year in an attempt to solve problems of the industry, said IMGC board director Wilfredo Telarman.

The problems and opportunities in the country's mango industry will be discussed during the eighth National Mango Congress from May 17 to 19 here.

Puerto Princesa battles air, noise pollution

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—THIS city prides itself in being the cleanest and greenest in the country. But it may well also be one of the noisiest because of its tricycles.

The tricycles with unique, larger-than-usual designs are intended to transport not just people, but cargo, too.

They are fitted with sidecars with shelves at the front and back sections to load produce.

The windshield is wide and the sidecar is roomy to accommodate more cargo or passengers.

As of 2005, there were about 4,000 tricycles in Puerto Princesa's population.

Each tricycle measures 1.6 meters in height, 1.8 meters in width, and almost 2 meters in length.

The tricycles are generally not road-worthy in design because the large sidecars are relatively unstable, most engines are old and poorly maintained.

They therefore take more effort to operate, and make more noise than their newer counterparts, reaching 90-97 decibels (dB).

Studies suggest prolonged exposure to noise levels at or above 80 dB can cause deafness.

But instead of decreasing, the number of tricycles has increased, and expected to further increase, due to growing demand and population growth.



THE UNIQUE tricycles are good and bad for Puerto Princesa.

To address the problem, Mayor Edward Hagedorn implemented a color-coding scheme for tricycles.

This effectively cut by half the number of tricycles plying the city streets, thereby reducing air pollution.

"It's an embarrassment to be promoting the city as environment-friendly when there was so much air pollution. So we had to make a very drastic move... traffic was immediately reduced," Hagedorn said during a recent interview.

But it has not been enough. The scheme did not address other problems, like poor tricycle maintenance and providing drivers with al-

ternative livelihood in a city with a 14-percent unemployment rate.

Most tricycle drivers are low-income earners.

A 2003 survey conducted by the Asian Development Bank found that 70 percent of the drivers do not properly maintain their tricycles.

They only earn a daily net income of between P100 and P150, or less than \$3. Tricycle-driving is a popular means of living here since it does not require much skill.

The ADB study also found that the road network was mostly made up of narrow streets and is not expanding.

Thus, all directions point to an in-

crease in demand for tricycles. This, despite the hazards they pose on the streets. But there is hope for the city's air pollution problem when it launched late last year an Air and Noise Pollution Reduction Strategies Project from a \$240,000-ADB grant.

The project will reduce air pollution from tricycles by the third quarter this year and provide more teeth to the enforcement of air pollution laws.

Half of the fund will go to a Tricycle Multi-Purpose Fund to help operators upgrade their engines from two-stroke to four-stroke engines or to explore other means of livelihood.

Drivers will be trained on proper maintenance of the tricycles.

The city's enforcement and monitoring of its Clean Air Act laws will also be strengthened, especially for roadside emission monitoring and in catching smoke belchers.

Registration of engines in operation for over 15 years will also be restricted.

The grant came from the ADB's Poverty and Environment Program, and will also tackle the environmental and the underlying social issues surrounding the tricycle sector.

The lessons learned from the project will be the basis in formulating and replicating strategies in other cities with similar air and noise pollution problems.

People, Events & Products

1st Pana MediaFest: A huge success!

IF YOU STILL BELIEVE IN THE saying "there is no such thing as a free lunch" then you certainly have missed the thrills and surprises during the Pana MediaFest. Organized by the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana) in cooperation with the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) - Radio Sector and the United Print Media Group (UPMG), this 2-day event was the first of its kind in the Philippines. It was primarily structured to help advertisers boost their marketing plans in these trying times by helping them re-discover the power of radio and print.

This 2-day event was held last April 20 - 21, at the ground floor of the Makati Stock Exchange Building. It was attended by more than a thousand people coming from both Pana and Non-Pana member companies, KBP and UPMG member companies, allied associations such as 4As, and by students and the academe.

The first day of the event commenced with a mass sponsored by

KBP. It was then followed by a ribbon-cutting ceremony done by the presidents of the three organizing bodies - Blen Fernando (Pana), Butch Canoy (KBP) and Pepito Olarte (UPMG). They also gave their individual welcome remarks to the members of the three organizations right after, to formally open the event.

Day one showcased an educational talk sponsored by KBP. The talk was primarily centered on the "Role of Radio in the Advertising Media Mix" and was facilitated by Jun Nicdao - president of the Manila Broadcasting Company and chair of KBP.

Day two gave its equal share of educational talks sponsored by UPMG. These talks were primarily centered on the power of print and why advertisers should go for it. Print and advertising authorities were invited to share their craft with the very enthusiastic public. Such authorities were Gabby Libby - VP for IT and press of the Philippine Daily Inquirer who talked about "The

Print Advertising Process"; Hermie De Leon - managing director of MediaWise who talked about "What Print Can Deliver for Clients"; Lizelle Maralag - managing director of Starcom Mediavest Group Philippines Inc who talked about "The Power or Unique Properties of Print" and David Guerrero - chief creative officer of BBDO/Guerrero Ortega who enticed the crowd with the creative side of print advertising. Because of this rare gathering of such brilliant minds, organizers were forced to stretch the limits of the lecture area and allow standing room just to accommodate all those who eagerly came to listen and be inspired.

Aside from the outstanding line-up of educational talks, the event also showcased some 82 participating KBP member networks and UPMG member companies who were all given the opportunity to exhibit their products and services to the people who attended. The Manila Broadcasting Company, for example, attracted



THE PRESIDENTS of the three organizing bodies: Butch Canoy (KBP), Blen Fernando (Pana) and Pepito Olarte (UPMG) during the ribbon cutting ceremony.

crowds of people with their "Radyo Roleta" games. Dream FM, on the other hand, drew attraction through the futuristic form and content of their booth, highlighted by the very slim and pretty dancing girls in pink. The booths of ABS-CBN Publishing and Philippine Daily Inquirer also attracted a huge number of visitors because of the numerous freebies being given out, e.g., glossy magazines and cuddly Guyito stuffed toys. Atlas Publishing brought in a number of celebrities and gorgeous ramp models who consistently entertained the public throughout the entire event.

These are just some of the hap-

penings that took place during the 2 days of the highly successful Pana MediaFest. All attendees left the venue premises with smiles on their faces. Aside from being enlightened by the lectures of the invited speakers, they also left with bags full of free souvenirs items. And best of all, admission to the media trade fare was free!

The 2006 Pana officers and board of directors would like to thank all those who helped make this event a huge success: the KBP and UPMG officers, their secretariat and exhibitors for participating in this 2-day media trade fair and for providing the much-needed advertising airtime and print space in

order to promote the event; the speakers who found time to share their knowledge about the power of radio and print in spite of their very busy schedules; the TBWA management and staff for conceptualizing and executing the eye-catching creative materials for the Pana MediaFest; the generous food and beverage sponsors who provided free-flowing food and drinks to all participants; the hard-working Pana secretariat, headed by their executive director Digna Santos, who made sure that everything was A-OK, and to all those who came and participated in this 2-day event. See you all at the next Pana MediaFest!



THE HARD-WORKING staff of the Pana secretariat. From left are: Ernel Getigan, Ian Salita, Aileen Lucero, Pana executive director Digna Santos, Pana president Blen Fernando, Annette Dizon, Mia Espiritu, Roy Jaucian, William Camus and Pana treasurer Bobby Banaag.

Acer gives you more time to enjoy summer

IT'S SUMMERTIME, AND MOST warm-bodied guys and gals will surely trek to popular vacation spots. But then again, there are those who prefer to enjoy their sweet time in solitude, completely attuned to their inner selves and are totally comfortable with hushed surroundings. With their digital devices in front of them, it's not a problem being alone, especially if you're armed with a laptop that's designed to give users more time to take pleasure in life's simple joys.

This is exactly what Acer, one of the world's leading manufacturers of laptops, desktop computers and other digital devices have in mind as they introduced to the market their latest laptop models. Take the Acer 5562WXM, for example. Armed with the revolutionary Intel Centrino Technology that boasts of the Core Duo processor for ultra-fast data processing, superb multi-tasking capabilities, extended connectivity and power saving features, everything that every cyberwarrior needs in his laptop is practically there.

With a wide 14.1-inch WXGA color LCD screen with Acer Grid Vista that allows for multi-grid

viewing, and backed up by an ATI Mobility RADEON X1400 with up to 512Mb HyperMemory, enjoying games, listening to music and watching videos, viewing photos, surfing the Net, or watching their favorite movies whether at the comfort of their homes, by the pool side, at the neighborhood coffee shop, or just about anywhere, would still be a truly spectacular and blissful viewing experience.

But that doesn't end there because the Acer 5562WXM offers more. It has one-touch access to most applications through its innovative Acer Empowering Technology software, where users can easily access certain applications through a single button, the Acer Signal Up Technology that increases signal strength up to a whopping 40 percent whenever you're surfing the Internet either out of the home or office, and more importantly, the Acer Aspire 5562SWXMi has the 8x DVD Double Layer drive, where one can record up to 8.5 gigabytes of data, equivalent to 4 hours of video or store more than

2,000 songs. If you have plans to make your own home movie with the family or friends, or upgrade your collection of songs and photos to compilation throughout the summer, this little baby truly packs the punch.

Overall, the Acer Aspire 5562WXM offers other remarkable elements, like the Hyper Memory technology for faster speeds and low power consumption, and Carbon-Fiber casing for 8 times more durability and toughness that's designed for the rugged user, and a host of other astonishing features. However, bottomline is the ultimate convenience and mobility that this baby brings, whether viewing multimedia data or simply surfing the Internet, as one whiles away the summer.

So if you're looking for that ultimate laptop that's packed with features that others can only dream about and at the same time translates to real value for money, which other laptop brands cannot really offer, then the Acer Aspire 5562WXM is for you, as it gives you more time and reason to enjoy the summer.

BUSINESSMonday

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

'Tiangge' problem may be mall owners' creation

Suspensions raised that some items sold cheaply are used for smuggling drugs

By Alex Y. Vergara

FOR SEVERAL SHOPPING SEASONS now, the Mecca of unbelievably cheap items in Divisoria and similar establishments all over the country have been blamed for reducing the bottom-line of big-time retailers by as much as 20 percent.

If allowed to fester, the multi-pronged problem is also bound to affect legitimate manufacturers and threaten the livelihood of Filipinos well beyond the confines of well-lit and air-conditioned malls and department stores. For a country with a consumption-led economy, the current situation is, indeed, a cause for concern.

Because of the depressed situation, a number of mall owners have begun to expand their operations overseas. SM, for one, now operates several malls in China, while the Ayala group is reportedly eyeing Indonesia.

But according to Samie Lim, retired chair of the Philippine Retailers Association and president of Blims Furniture, the 168 Mall in Divisoria and its ilk are just symptoms of a bigger problem spawned by mall operators themselves.

Because of the seeming gravity of the problem, PRA has enlisted the help of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, to which it is affiliated.

To complicate the situation, a hard-up public seems to welcome the influx of cheap goods found in numerous *tiangge* (small, itinerant stores) and flea markets,

never mind if they end up spending more in the long run since some of these products are of sub-standard quality.

"The problem's history dates back to 10 years with the introduction of the *tiangge*," says Lim. "In their quest for more income, mall owners have unwittingly created a Frankenstein that threatens the viability of their bigger legitimate tenants."

In an ironic twist, part of the lease of bigger tenants such as Penshoppe, Cinderella and Bench pay go to common areas, which, in turn, mall owners rent out to *tiangge* operators.

Not paying the right amount of taxes is just one of their alleged transgressions. These small-time merchants pay a fixed amount while the tenants with specific spaces to maintain and promote, pay a percentage of their gross sales (as much as three percent) to malls where they do business on top of their monthly lease.

Legitimate tenants have no way to evade such deductions since their cash registers are linked to a mall's version of Big Brother—an all-seeing, all-knowing super computer.

"There's a valid reason why mall owners are charging us that much," says Malou de Venecia, marketing and communications director of Cinderella Marketing Corp. "They have bigger overheads. They also promote and market their malls, which in turn bring in potential shoppers. Still, we can't help but feel that the situation is a bit unfair."



IT DIDN'T take long for some enterprising individuals to put up air-conditioned buildings with small spaces to rent out at rock-bottom rates.

uation is a bit unfair."

They may seem almost invisible next to the likes of Penshoppe and Bench, but small-time is hardly the word to describe people behind these *tiangge*, says Lim. Aware that there's strength in numbers and emboldened by concessions they get from major players such as SM, Robinson's and Ayala, *tiangge* owners have formed groups.

The *tiangge's* entry seemed innocuous enough in the beginning.

"It began as harmless lifestyle projects such as photo and car exhibits," he said. "Some enterprising mall people saw that there's money in renting out unused common areas. As they got greed-

ier, they started charging owners of *tiangge* higher rentals."

Owners of *tiangge*, in turn, saw that they could get better deals and cheaper rents in places such as Baclaran, Quiapo, Greenhills and, yes, Divisoria if they group together.

It didn't take long for some enterprising individuals to invest on air-conditioned buildings with small spaces to rent out to *tiangge* operators at rock-bottom rates. Thus, the likes of 168 was born.

Not just in Manila

"It may not be as fancy and as spacious as some malls are," says Lim, "but the place is well-lit, clean, air-conditioned and best of

all charges much lower rates than malls do."

The phenomenon called 168 isn't confined to Metro Manila. It's replicated in other parts of the country such as Davao and Cebu, Lim adds.

Apart from encroaching on the turf of big-time retailers, some of these fly-by-night entrepreneurs are also displacing Filipino workers, as not a few of them are from mainland China. If they do employ Filipinos, most of them are reportedly paid below-minimum wages. And most of the earnings of these foreigners go back to their countries.

As to how stores at 168 and similar establishments are able to

sell their goods at almost giveaway-prices, Lim declines to go on the record.

But not a few observers believe that these items, the bulk of which come from China, are used merely to bring in much more expensive contraband, even drugs. For them to operate with impunity, these foreign businessmen are believed to enjoy the protection of certain government officials.

In the face of such dirt-cheap products, seasoned retailers remain confident that their goods will prevail in the end. For one, they know their stuff are more superior compared to what's available in the *tiangge*.

These unknown entities are also bereft of the cachet branded products possess by virtue either of their heritage or the magic bestowed by their famous endorsers (Bench, Bayo, Folded & Hung and Kamiseta, to name a few).

"I believe it's just a phase we're all going through," says Dino Sagun, VP for sales of Golden ABC, Inc., the company behind Penshoppe, Oxygen and Memo. "People are bound to find out, that these products are definitely much more inferior compared to branded ones. It pays to buy products made by companies with proven track records."

De Venecia remains equally optimistic that quality and brand recall will win the day for them. Besides, places like 168 don't offer added services, from sound fashion tips courtesy of trained sales personnel to facilities for credit-card purchases, like stores in malls do.

State of RP's economy, according to Divisoria

By Christopher Aquino, Precious Azul, Mark Christopher Babor, Jayson Opeña, Anne Therese Salgado
Contributors

ONE NEED NOT INTERVIEW AN economist to understand what is happening with the Philippine economy. One only needs to walk the streets of Divisoria, prowl its shops, observe, talk to the people and their stories will tell you the state of the local economy.

People from all walks of life shop in Divisoria—from the ladies of Forbes Park to the squatters of Manila.

For 25 years, Corazon Jacinto, 49, separated, has been a vegetable vendor along the busy streets of Divisoria. She claims that her daily income now is much lower than in the past years.

"The inflow of sales is too slow these days," she admits.

She also says that unlike years ago when she could give her five children with their whims, her income today is just enough for their basic needs.

There is not much money left for extras.

Divisoria, dubbed as the mother of all markets in Manila, has been busy all these years. It is a shopping haven for people from all walks of life.

This is the center of all trade, from dry to wet goods. You name it, Divisoria has it.

As long as you are not particular about the smell and frenzied atmosphere of the place, you can find good bargains.

As long as you are alert for pick-pockets and snatchers, you will not lose your money.

As long as you can negotiate the traffic and maneuver in the jam-packed humanity, you will survive.

And, the main reason thousands of Filipinos keep coming back to Divisoria is it offers goods at rock-bottom prices.

"I came from Sampaloc, Metro Manila. I prefer to buy here in Divisoria because the prices are about 50 percent cheaper than in Sampaloc," says Crisencia Salas, a Divisoria shopper, in Filipino.

Rose Guinoo, a sewer, agrees.



PEOPLE from all walks of life shop at Divisoria, making it a barometer of how well businesses are doing.

"This is where I buy linen because I can get it only for P80-P90 yard compared to P150 per yard in other stores," she says.

Divisoria vendors quote wholesale prices because they usually sell products in bulk.

But people can still choose to buy just one piece and still get a very good deal.

Though people can get just about anything at the lowest price in Divisoria, store owners and workers come to the same conclusion: Sales are declining.

Jacinto says he now earns only P1,000 a day from selling vegetables, compared to as much as P5,000 a day a few years ago.

"To think that the cost of living was lower before," she adds.

She also says that years ago, those who started selling at 2 am, got back their capital by 7 am.

These days, she is only able to close her shop for the day by noon.

"It's because these days, there seems to be more vendors than buyers," she says.

For her, competition is very stiff in Divisoria these days.

"The number of people who want to put businesses here is growing largely because they think that business here is good," she says, "Everybody wants to earn a living."

The vendors believe that

poverty is the root of their problem with declining sales.

"People don't have enough money to spend for our goods," Jaime Latigay, a clothing shop sales boy says.

And because of poverty, the Divisoria people observe that buyers resort to buying in retail. According to them, people are more practical now.

Most of the customers look for ways to stretch their peso.

Merlinda Araullo, grocery store owner, says that customers are into buying in economy packs or sachets.

"Shampoos in sachets, laundry and bath soaps in small packs and vinegars and soy sauce in terra packs sell well these days," she says.

Maria Palacio, an onion and garlic wholesaler, says her customers now prefer the "rejects" because these are cheaper than the first class onions.

The same story was shared by Anne, who sells souvenirs. She says that from 1995-2000 her store earned about P1,000 a day.

Those days are gone.

"There was a time when we did not have any sales for the day," she adds.

Liza Duran, a saleslady in an electronics shop, says the store was not spared from declining

sales.

The electronics shop used to post P100,000-P150,000 a day in sales.

Today, it's down to P15,000-P30,000 a day.

"It all started when the Value Added Tax was implemented," she says.

She adds that the owners have no choice but to increase the prices of their products.

Because of higher prices, fewer people go to their stores, thus, sales started to decline.

Her boss was forced to close two of the three branches, keeping just the one in Divisoria.

Lydia Sandigan of Quezon Province, a frequent buyer in Divisoria, admits that she used to go to Divisoria twice a month.

Now, she only makes the trip from Quezon once a month.

There's no reason to go more than once because her store in Quezon is not doing that well either because of her customers' weaker purchasing power.

Noticeably, imitations of branded clothes, footwear, bags, accessories and other items that flood the streets of Divisoria are in demand.

"I like it because it's cheap and it looks just like the original," Warren Adille, a student, says.

Customers always look for substitutes to regular goods, all in the name of lower prices.

"Pirated CDs and DVDs sell more because these are cheaper than the original ones," he says.

November and December are the peak months for sales in Divisoria.

The summer months are the weakest.

"The only products that sell are the summer outfits—beach attires, beach walks and shades," says Ricky Manalo, a sales boy.

Clothes that are comfortable to wear this summer like sandos and shorts are selling well at P35-P100 each.

Toward June, sales of school supplies, such as ball pens, pencils, papers, notebooks and bags sell well in Divisoria.

Prices may go up and down but one thing is constant: Divisoria will remain a key economic indicator of the health of the Philippine economy.

Independent directors

IN THIS SEASON OF ANNUAL stockholders' meetings, some corporations do not have a free hand in deciding on the composition of their boards of directors.

The general rule is, the stockholders can elect as director anyone among them who owns at least one share of stock and is not disqualified by law or their by-laws from taking on that job.

That right, however, is restricted for corporations that, under our laws, are required to sit one or more independent directors in their boards.

An independent director is "a person who, apart from his fees and shareholdings, is independent of management and free from any business or other relationship which could, or could reasonably be perceived to, materially interfere with his exercise of independent judgment in carrying out his responsibilities as a director."

In 2002, the Securities and Exchange Commission issued a circular that, enumerates the six characteristics a person should NOT have to qualify him for the position of independent director.

The bottom line is: He has no personal, financial or professional ties with the corporation or its affiliates and subsidiaries that may adversely affect his ability to act objectively in the performance of his duties and responsibilities as director.

To date, nine kinds of corporations are required to elect "outsiders" in their boards.

These companies are engaged in the sale and distribution of securities or financial instruments that promise possible good returns.

The list of securities-related companies includes:

- Issuers of securities (such as, stocks, bonds and debentures) that are registered with the SEC;
- Stock and other securities exchanges;
- Public companies, or those with assets of at least P50 million and having 200 or more holders who each hold at least 100 shares of a class of stocks;
- Brokers and dealers of securities; and
- Subsidiaries or branches of foreign corporations in the Philippines whose securities are listed in the local stock exchange.

The issuers of registered securities and public companies should have no less than two independent directors or at least 20 percent of its board membership, whichever is lesser.

For stock exchanges, the magic

Corporate Securities Info

Raul J. Palabrica

number is three, in addition to an independent director-president.

Rounding up the roster of companies that are obliged to elect independent directors are finance companies, investment houses, investment companies and pre-ned companies.

An investment house is engaged in the business of underwriting (or guaranteeing the distribution and sale) of securities of other parties, while an investment company invests, reinvests or trades in securities.

Except for issuers of registered securities, public companies and stock exchanges, the rest of the companies mentioned are required to elect at least one independent director in their boards.

If these companies are in the mood to go beyond the minimum, they are most welcome.

By requiring the election of independent directors, the law seeks to minimize the incidence of fraudulent conduct in the board rooms of the companies mentioned.

The "outsider" director is meant to call the attention of his peers if he thinks anyone of them or the company itself is veering away from the path of good corporate governance.

The qualifications of independent directors are: Aside from the standard requirement of owning at least one share of stock, he should, at the minimum, be a college graduate or has been engaged or exposed to the business of the corporation for not less than five years.

He should also be person of integrity or probity, and is hard-working.

The companies required to put independent directors in their boards are not the run-of-the-mill types.

For the fees that they will pay these directors, these companies will not be content with persons who meet the minimum requirements for the job.

The country is not lacking in men and women who can add value to the corporation without losing sight of the purpose for which the law requires them to be placed in the board. Feedback at rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph

INFOTECH

Text us your feedback: inquirer it name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Editor Leo Magno

IT exec sees two technologies changing industry

By Leo Magno

TWO TECHNOLOGIES ARE CHANGING the way information is set and managed across the enterprise, and these will dictate how the IT industry will evolve in the future.

This, at least, is how Joe Tucci sees it. Tucci—president, chair and CEO of EMC Corp.—has successfully led his company's transformation from a storage company to an information infrastructure firm. He now sees two more technologies radically changing his company and the IT industry in general.

Tucci calls them "game-changing" technologies, and these are "virtualization" and the use of "smarts."

"I personally believe that in the near future, all hardware and software products will be virtualized. The entire data center infrastructure will be virtualized," he said.

Virtualization is the setup of a network's resources—like storage, computing power, applications, database and other services—such that the components of the network can be accessed even though they are not physically or geographically in the same location. They could all be connected despite being apart, creating a virtual network which the user would see as a whole without caring about the physical location of the resources because they can still be accessed as if they were in one room.

The second "game-changing" technolo-

gy according to Tucci is the use of "smarts" or software agents in servers performing intelligent system-related actions. This is all lined up toward the use of web services, a model-based method of conducting operations on a network using specific services that are called upon by the client from the server over the web.

"Smarts will change IP-based networking," says Tucci. "Servers are becoming more intelligent."

In preparation for such "game-changing" technologies that might affect the IT industry, Tucci says EMC is investing \$1.2 billion a year in research and development.

"We need to follow the inflection points and be prepared for changes, and become

as flexible as possible," he says.

EMC, he says, has shown much resilience in the face of such changes and industry upheavals. From 1991 to 2002, EMC was known as a storage company. From 2003 to 2005 the company adjusted to industry changes and became a storage and information management firm. Today, says Tucci, EMC has become an information infrastructure company.

The change is reflected in the company's revenue mix. In 2000, EMC's business was comprised of 74 percent systems or hardware, 16 percent software and 10 percent services. In 2005, systems and hardware represented only 47 percent of EMC's business, while the software side grew to 37 percent and the services side

grew to 16 percent.

Tucci also cites the results of a survey from Morgan Stanley conducted January 2006, which showed that the top 10 technology spending priorities of CIOs today are software security, network security, storage area networks, wireless LAN, storage software, portal software, VoIP, IT training, storage hardware and business intelligence.

"EMC is in the market of five out of these 10 top priorities of CIOs, and that's where we'll continue developing our products and retain our focus," says Tucci. "It's all about building the information infrastructure. It's information at the core, not just storage, and we'll continue to focus on that."



SMBs GUIDE TO BUYING PCS

Whether buying your first PC or creating a network, your computer should be tailored to your company's needs. Below are the top 10 things to consider when purchasing PCs.

1. Why do you need this computer?

Knowing how the PC will be used is a good way to determine the right PC for your business.

2. Beware of refurbished computers

Although upgrading components to extend your computer's life may superficially cost less than a ready-made computer, it can be less reliable and may cost more in the long run.

3. Laptop or Desktop?

If your employees constantly need access to company data on the go, laptops are the best solution. With wireless technology like Intel® Centrino® Duo, your employees can connect to the Internet in most international airports and cafés.

4. Software—where to start?

Windows*, Macintosh OS*, and Linux* all have their strengths. Use what you are comfortable with, and what you need to accomplish your most important tasks.

5. Extras?

If you plan on running professional programs or have some very specialized tasks, you may need to add extra components to your computer, such as a video card with graphics accelerator, digital cameras, web cams, etc.

6. Don't Skimp on Security!

You cannot afford to risk your business's data. Make sure your computer is powerful enough to run anti-virus software while not disrupting other programs.

7. Memory

For basic applications, you should have at least 256 Megabytes (MB) of RAM while you should have a minimum of 512MB for graphics programs. Basic word processing requires a hard drive that is 40Gigabytes (GB) but if you are dealing with a lot of images, music, or other large files, you should invest in at least 80GB.

8. Power

Again, consider how the computer will be used. If you often use compute intensive programs or do a lot of multitasking, then invest in the Intel® Pentium® D processor supporting Hyper-Threading Technology for desktop PCs. Meanwhile, the Intel® Centrino® Duo is the best bet for notebooks.

9. Cheaper isn't always better

Your computer is an investment that should provide three years of optimal performance for a desktop PC and two years for a notebook. It should also provide headroom and flexibility for new software or more demanding usage patterns over time. IT should be a long-term relationship, so select a company and brand you can trust.

10. Don't be dazed by sales lingo

Knowing a few essential PC terms will help you navigate through a sales pitch. Get to know what you need in a PC before going to the store and buying one.

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*Other names and brands may be claimed as the property of others.

Hyper-Threading Technology requires a computer system with an Intel® Pentium® D processor supporting HT Technology and a HT Technology enabled chipset, BIOS and operating system. Performance will vary depending on the specific hardware and software you use. See www.intel.com/info/hyperthreading for more information including details on which processors support HT Technology.

<http://www.pcworld.com/stories/infoguide/0,0,0,1,4,page,2,00.asp>

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region VIII
DIVISION OFFICE OF SAMAR
Catbalogan

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education, Division Office of Samar, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites manufacturers, suppliers, distributors and contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder contract:

Division of Samar	Name of Contract	Location	Approved Budget for the Contract	Contract Duration
Cluster E	Delivery and Supply of Elem. Tables & Chairs	Various Elem. Schools	4,422,500.00	150 CD
Cluster S	Delivery and Supply of Secondary Armchairs	Various Secondary Schools	1,105,374.00	150 CD

Prospective bidders should possess a Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 20% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment available for the implementation of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the evaluation of eligibility documents. This will be done during the opening of bids and only those found eligible will be entitled to the opening of their technical and financial proposals.

DELIVERY SCHEME: "Door to door" delivery to recipient schools

The schedule of BAC activities are as follows:

BAC ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Eligibility and Bid Forms	May 8-15, 2006
2. Pre-bid Conference	May 23, 2006 @ 10:00 a.m. DepEd, Division Office
3. Receipt and Opening of Bids	June 6, 2006 @ 8:00 a.m. DepEd, Division Office

The BAC shall issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms and Bid forms upon their submission at the Division of Samar, their letter of application stipulating the cluster/clusters they are interested to bid. Said documents shall only be released upon payment of non-refundable amount for the following:

Cluster E - P4,400.00 Cluster S - P1,100.00

The Department of Education, Division Office, Catbalogan, Samar through its BAC reserves the rights to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process or declare failure of bidding at anytime prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) CAMILO J. JABONETE
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - May 1, 2006)



PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. GUAGUA, PAMPANGA

April 28, 2006

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF BIDDERS

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (PELCO II) with OFFICE ADDRESS AT SAN ROQUE, GUAGUA, PAMPANGA IS INVITING ELIGIBLE BIDDERS FOR THE SUPPLY, DELIVERY AND INSTALLATION OF ONE (1) COMPLETE SET OF SF6 CIRCUIT BREAKER (DEAD TANK) WITH BATTERY CHARGER, BATTERY AND CONTROL PANEL.

Specification:

Rated Maximum Volts	72.5Kv
Rated Continuous Current	1,200 A
Frequency	60 Hz
Brand	Made & Manufactured at USA or Europe

You are therefore invited for the pre-qualification to bid on May 4, 2006 (Thursday), 10:00 A.M. at PELCO II Board Room San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga wherein there will be an open discussion with regards to the specification of the unit and in preparation for the bidding proper scheduled on May 11, 2006 (Thursday) at 10:00 A.M.

The PBAC will only accept units made and manufactured from USA and Europe.

Please be informed that non-attendance on scheduled pre-qualification to bid is an outright disqualification for those bidders who wants to join the bidding proper.

For more information please see/ contact Engr. Raul L. Canlas or Engr. Agosto L. Ocampo at PELCO II Office or dial numbers at (045) 901-0865, 900-2650.

(Sgd.) ENGR. RAUL L. CANLAS
PBAC Chairperson

(PDI - April 30 & May 1, 2006)



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POEA License Number 102-SB-061002-NL Accreditation Number 23420

Bulk Carrier - 20,000 GRT, MITS:Dep May-June

3 Chief Officer	USD 2,900.00 negotiable
3 Chief Engineer	USD 4,200.00 negotiable

General Cargo - 13,000 GRT, MAN-B&W: Dep May-June

3 2nd Engineer	USD 2,900.00 negotiable
3 Chief Officer	USD 2,900.00 negotiable

Container - 25,300 GRT, MAN-B&W: Dep May-June

3 Chief Officer	USD 3,300.00 negotiable
3 2nd Engineer	USD 3,300.00 negotiable
3 Electrician	USD 2,300.00 negotiable

LPG - 4,000 GRT: Dep. Mid June

2 Chief Officer	USD 3,600.00 negotiable
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Product Tanker - 28,000 GRT: Dep. Mid June

2 Chief Officer	USD 3,600 negotiable
1 2nd Engineer	USD 3,600 negotiable

Higher Salaries can be offered subject to the experience of the applicant and results of background check.

Persons in Charge:

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- > 1.9 HAS. APPROVED SOCIALIZED/LOW-COST HOUSING SUBD.;
- > 1 HAS. LOT INSIDE A FULLY DEVELOPED SUBDIVISION WITH OVERLOOKING VIEW OF THE CORDILLERA MOUNTAIN RANGES & GLIMPSE OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA (IDEAL FOR RETREAT HOUSE OR CORPORATE SEMINAR/STAFF HOUSE)

PRIME PROPERTY IN CABANATUAN CITY

- > READY FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
- > 7.1 HAS. APPROVED SOCIALIZED/LOW-COST HOUSING SUBD.
- > 2 RAWLANDS AT 1.3 HAS. EACH BESIDE A FULLY DEVELOPED SUBDIVISION

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY IN CABANATUAN CITY

- > 1.7 HAS. PRIME COMMERCIAL LOT

COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES IN BULACAN

- > 200 TO 500 SQ.M COMM'L LOTS ALONG MCARTHUR HIGHWAY, 45 KMS. FROM QUEZON CITY
- > 10 HAS. ORCHARD FARM PROPERTY, 50 KMS. FROM Q. CITY
- > 2.6 HAS. INDUSTRIAL, 65 KMS. FROM QUEZON CITY

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- > ONE STOREY CONCRETE; ABUNDANT WATER SUPPLY THREE PHASE ELECTRICITY BY MERALCO; WITH DIRECT DIAL TELEPHONE LINE; 1,008 & 707.25 SQUARE METERS FLOOR AREA

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- > FARM LOTS, 110 KMS. FROM MANILA, 25 KMS. FROM SUBIC, 500 TO 1,000 SQ., WITH FRUIT BEARING TREES, 9 FEET TALL PERIMETER SECURITY FENCE, CLUBHOUSE, TENNIS COURT, BASKETBALL COURT AND SWIMMING POOL & JACUZZI

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NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the loss of the following stock certificates in the name of the following companies as listed herein:
ISSUING COMPANY: AYALA CORP.
Registered name: Tibayan Management Group International Holdings Co. Ltd. (25278) - 15,000 shares; (33553) - 3,000 shares; (37008) - 5,000 shares.
ISSUING COMPANY: AYALA LAND INC.
Registered Name: TMG International Holdings Co. Ltd. (37850) - 5,000 shares.
ISSUING COMPANY: GLOBE TELECOM
Registered Name - TMG International Holdings Co. Ltd. (2815) - 20 shares; (13925) - 5 shares.
ISSUING COMPANY: BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS; Registered Name: Tibayan Management Group - (181781) - 1,000 shares; (197940) - 250 shares; (229579) - 250 shares; (243853) - 200 shares; TMG International Company Ltd. - (142815) - 2,000 shares; (201075) - 500 shares; (201378) - 1,000 shares; (221033) - 700 shares. If no contest received, new certificate will be issued.
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First Philippine
Holdings Corporation

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS MEETING

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS:

Please take notice that the Annual Stockholders Meeting of First Philippine Holdings Corporation will be held on **Monday, May 15, 2006 at 3:00 p.m.** at the **Meralco Theater, Lopez Building, Ortigas Ave., Pasig City.**

The Agenda of the meeting are as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Proof of Required Notice
3. Determination of Quorum
4. Approval of the Minutes of the June 8, 2005 Stockholders Meeting
5. Reports of the Chairman & the President
6. Approval/Ratification of the December 31, 2005 Reports and the Audited Financial Statements
7. Ratification of the Acts of the Board, of the Executive Committee and of Management
8. Election of Directors
9. Appointment of External Auditors
10. Other Matters
11. Adjournment

The deadline for submission of proxy is May 8, 2006. For your convenience in registering your attendance, please present some form of identification, such as passport, driver's license, or company I.D. Registration will start at 2:00 p.m.

(Sgd.) ENRIQUE I. QUIASON
Corporate Secretary

(PDI-May 1, 2006)

OBITUARIES

JOSE "JOELAC" PARAS LACSAMANA, SR.

OF TARLAC CITY, CONCEPCION, TARLAC, AND MABALACAT, PAMPANGA

PAST DIRECTOR & VICE PRESIDENT, CENTRAL AZUCARERA DE TARLAC SUGAR PLANTERS ASSOCIATION
PAST DIRECTOR & TREASURER, CENTRAL AZUCARERA DE TARLAC PLANTERS COOPERATIVE MARKETING ASSOCIATION

Peacefully returned to his Creator on Tuesday, April 25, 2006. Born June 10, 1912, he was preceded in death by his loving wife, Gloria Pasion.

He is survived by his beloved children: Zenaida & Rene Capulong, Florente & Medy David, Jose, Jr. & Charity Soliman, Mansueta, Danilo & Araceli Ungson, Luis Redentor & Irma Alma Donato; his grandchildren: Rachelle Angelie & Ari Hakim, Rene Aldrin, Regina Aine & Matt Clements, Joseph Jason, Timothy James, Dylan Joseph & Judy Mineko, Karen Nina, Nicholas Joseph, Louis Joseph & Louise Gloria; great-grandchildren: Kobe Joseph, Mary Chloe, Bodhi Makana and Kai Abraham, and his sisters-in-law: Enriqueta Mallari and Clara Pasion.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at 88 Juan Luna St., Barangay Mabini in Tarlac City.

A memorial Mass will be celebrated at 8:00 am on Thursday, May 4, 2006 at the San Sebastian Cathedral. Interment will follow immediately at the Garden of Ascension, Barangay Tibag in Tarlac City.

His family, relatives and friends request the reader to pray to the eternal repose of his soul.

In Loving Memory
of the 1st Death Anniversary

our beloved father,

Com. Casimiro "Nene" R. Madarang Jr.

who joined his Creator last May 1, 2005

Holy Masses will be held at the following Churches:

National Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, Retiro	7:00 a.m.
Mount Carmel Shrine, New Manila	7:00 a.m. / 6:00 p.m.
St. Joseph Convent of Perpetual Adoration, New Manila	6:00 a.m.
Sto. Domingo Church	6:00 p.m.

"Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free. I'm following the path God laid for me. I took His hand when I heard His call. I turned my back & left it all. I could not stay another day, to laugh, to love, to work or pray. Tasks left undone must stay that way, I found that peace at the close of day. If my parting has left a void, then fill it with remembered joy. Perhaps my time has seemed all too brief, don't lengthen it now with undue grief. Lift up your hearts, & share with me. God wanted me. He set me free."

The family requests relatives, friends & the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose & peace of his soul. Holy Masses will also be held at several Cebu City churches.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

OBITUARIES

Angela Lagman Colmenares

Peacefully joined her Creator
on April 25, 2006 at the age of 88.

Her bereaved husband Buenaventura Montelibano Colmenares, her children, Baby & Silas Salvador, Tiny & Tony Parcon, Nonoy & MaryAnn, Mila; her grandchildren, great grandchildren, brothers, sisters and relatives request the pious reader to say a prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence in Quezon cor. Zamora Sts., Hinigaran, Negros Occidental.

Interment will be on Wednesday, May 3, 2006 at the family mausoleum after the 2:00 p.m. mass at the Mary Magdalene Parish Church, Hinigaran.

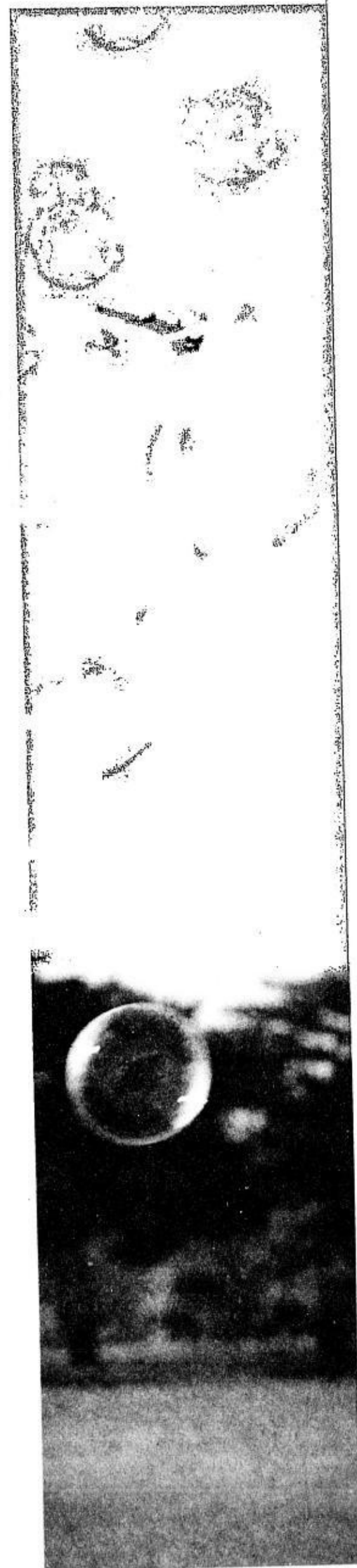
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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
Subsection Editor Lito B. Zulueta

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS

Fred Baldemor's 'warm' sculptures

The pieces show the form and mood of life in repose

"THREE Graces"

By Benjamin V. Afuang
Contributor

A CONSISTENT FAVORITE among art collectors, sculptor-painter Fred Baldemor will excite the contemporary art scene once more during the inaugural exhibit of Artasia, a new gallery at SM Megamall, on May 5 at 6 p.m.

Pursuing his themes of nudes, motherhood, and other figures, Baldemor extends his range to the near-classical figurative subjects that may have evolved from his paintings and drawings. (Baldemor forms his ideas on drawing paper or canvas quite independently, not even visualizing how they will look in clay, should he choose to turn them into more solid pieces later. The sketches and paintings keep their own worth, but they probably have a "germinating" effect on Baldemor's future metal and stone pieces.)

His new collection has indefinitely sized but heavy scales. Especially notable for their substance and surface are his "Three Graces"—nudes in bronze—which show the form and mood of life in repose. Another bronze piece depicting a Mother and Child reveals all that can be visually understood of nourishing love. The four bronze figures alone weigh more than 100 kilos.

Baldemor's latest works in bronze and other "hard" materials definitely have "corrected" earlier notions that sculpture was nothing but a dispassionate art form. In his more than 15 pieces, he succeeds at defining warmth in metal, jade, alabaster, and marble in the light of their natural hues, while maintaining the figures' time-challenging strength and solidity. It's this "thought-cum-feeling" process that puts his new works in the stream of the New Figuration style that has excited the sculpture scene in many parts of the world.

Sculpture aficionados will remember Baldemor's wood and stone icons of the Via Crucis exhibited during Lent last year, and some wood and metal pieces in a New York City event a few months ago. They were immediately hailed as representing Baldemor's creativity at its peak. But his new works can easily dispute that, with evidence of the sculptor's new techniques and fresh direction, apart from his being in a more inspired mode now for finding an apt setting for the pieces in a new gallery. To paraphrase a rare quotation from Oliver Wendell Holmes, such a creative mind "stretched to a new idea" hardly returns to its original dimensions.

Like grandfather, like granddaughter

Included in the exhibit are works by Baldemor's granddaughter, Emi Zoerya Baldemor-Abuel.

Baldemor said two years ago, Emi Zoerya, then 2 years old, was watching him paint in his workshop in Pasig City. A little bit later the child begged him for some pencils and drawing paper. She said she wanted to draw "things" just like her "dada" (grandpa).

Fred could little understand what was percolating in the child's mind then, but in his presence she began to produce dozens of "abstract" drawings which, Fred thought, could "amount to something" if laid down on canvas.

A few months later, Emi Zoerya began to

FRED/C2



"THREE Graces"

time for you to shine!

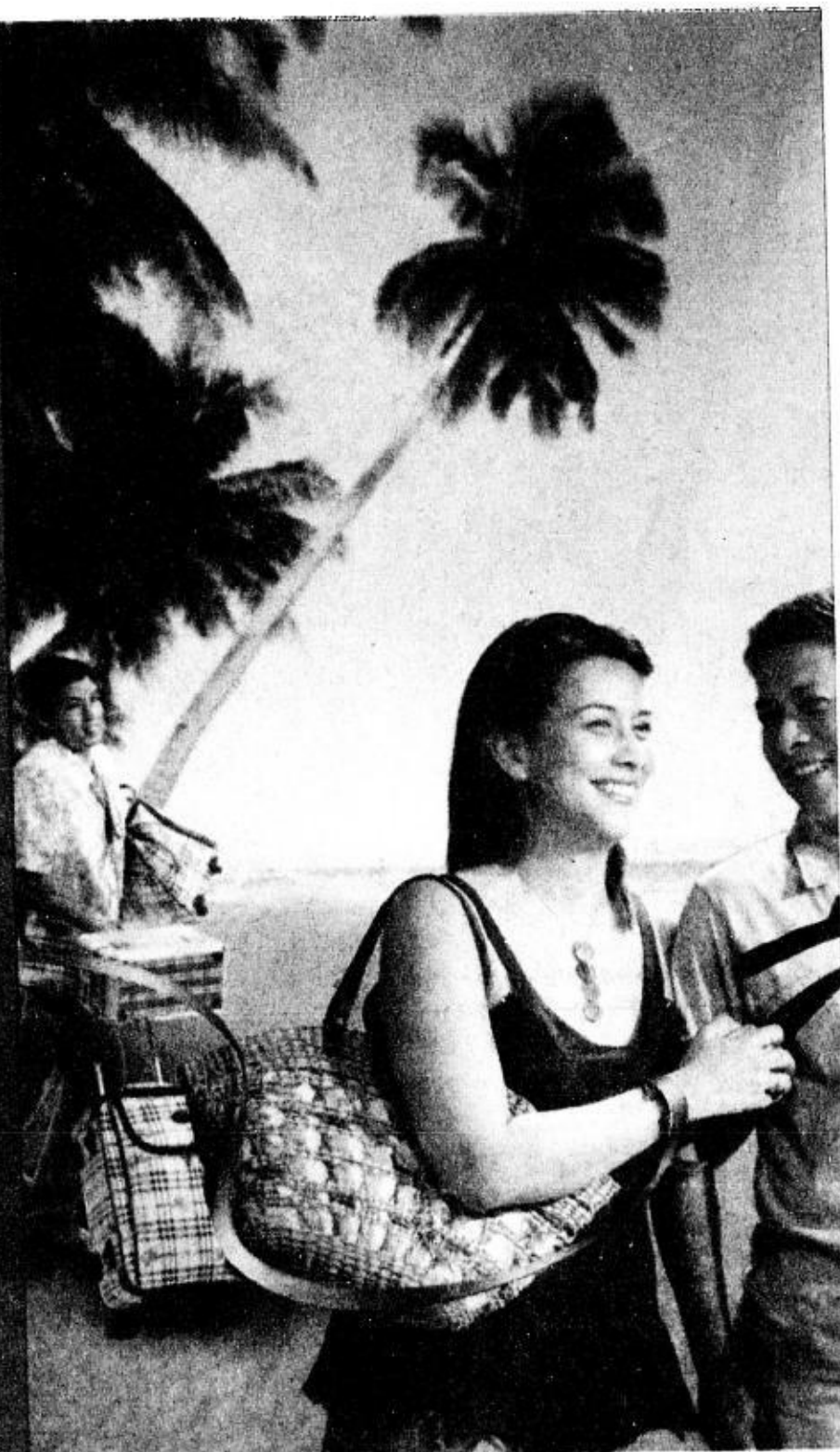
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LIFESTYLE

Fred Baldemor's 'warm' sculptures



"THREE Graces,"
by Fred Baldemor

From page C1

tell his grandfather what she was drawing and painting on bigger pieces of paper and recycled canvas. She had turned into a real artist, creating from inner vision figurations in charcoal, ink and acrylic, with clarity and form. Fred promptly saw harmony, depth, and "feeling" in the various images she had sketched and painted. After seeing hundreds of her works, Fred was convinced she was creatively mature enough to clarify for herself the visual world she was growing up in.

Emi Zoerya's early works have since been presented abroad—in the 2004 Tian-jen International Children's Painting competition; International Village in Tokyo, Japan, in March 2004; and a joint exhibit



EMI Zoerya

She is an instant hit among collectors, those who simply adore a prodigy



"MEGASERIES," by Emi Zoerya



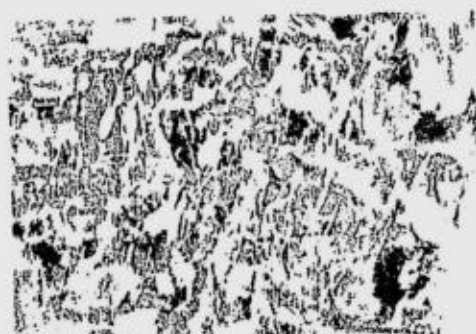
with Fred Baldemor and her uncle, Walter Baldemor, at the Philippine Center in New York City last October. She had her first solo exhibit at Shangri-La Plaza in Mandaluyong in December 2004.

All those events have undoubtedly encouraged this young artist to visualize more, paint more, and put on more shows. Her works have been instant hits among collectors, particularly parents, and those who simply adore a prodigy.

On Friday, May 5, Emi Zoerya joins her grandfather in the show "Zoe (Gift of God)," where more than 60 of her new works, along with Fred's 15 major pieces of sculpture, will be on exhibit.

Artasia is on the fourth floor of Megamall.

VISUAL ARTS



"MIDSUMMER," by Cid Reyes

Cid Reyes at West

Artist-critic mounts his 12th solo exhibit, "Midsummer," on May 4 at the West Gallery in SM Megamall. The exhibit features his recent abstractions inspired by poems celebrating nature and summer. The works are characterized by splashes of brilliant colors and expressionist brushstrokes that conjure the spirit of the season. The show runs till May 16.

Various works at Ricco Renzo

Ricco Renzo Galleries & Caffe is holding "Textures and Landscapes," which features the works of Tony Alcasid, Paulino Garcia Jr., and Gerry Ingco. Alcasid, a banker by profession, has a passion for mixed media. Garcia, a corporate executive, is an impressionist at heart with a fauvist bent. Ingco is an abstract tactile painter whose austere bronze tones and strokes tell a story with its varying rhythms. Ricco Renzo Galleries & Caffe is at the LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St., Bel Air 2, Makati. Call 8982542/43 or visit www.riccorenzo.com for details.

Flower show at UP Vargas

In celebration of the summer month of May, the UP Vargas Museum brings together artworks focusing on flowers as subject. These are made by various artists in different styles and interpretations. Mona and Cris Cruz are two of the more renowned artists who made names for themselves painting flowers. The exhibition will be highlighted by a Flores de Mayo on May 28, featuring fashion created by past and present members of the Young Designers Guild. The exhibit runs until June 4. The project is assisted by Avellana Art Gallery.



"LEARN to Float,"
by Sandra Fabie-Gfeller

Large work at Artists-Run

SANDRA Fabie-Gfeller's large-scale "Learn to Float" will hang at the Artists-Run Independent Art Space (3/F Suite 318-A, LRI Business Plaza, Nicanor Garcia St. [formerly Reposo], Bel Air 2, Makati), on April 26-May 10. Call 8959837.

Beltran at Finale

Opening on May 5 at the Finale Art File (4/F LaO Center, Pasay Road cor. Makati Ave., Makati City) is Pol Beltran's "Brown Race Rules!" Delving into the Filipinos' relationship with the Catholic faith, the exhibit features, among others, a series of 45 photographs of the "crucifixion" the artist took in Pampanga during the Holy Week. Beltran explores how a traditional symbolic event is ritualized and transformed into the inanity of a spectacle. Call 8132310 or 8125034.

Leaño at West

ERWIN Leaño presents "Familiar Territories," until May 2, at West Gallery, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong. The exhibit highlights Leaño's fascination with architecture, planes and colors. Call 6341284.

Various artists at Avellana

Ongoing until May 6 at the Avellana Art Gallery are three simultaneous exhibits. Pidge Reyes' "24 Hours" presents the artist's monolithic sculptural pieces in cement which are his interpretations of measured time. Eugene Jarque's "Surface Tension" illustrates the tensions and motions of amorphous shapes and furious gesturing on the flat, smooth surface of metal. Gus Albor's "Lason" is an abstract investigation of texture and the consequence of color against nonconventional canvas such as an office folder. Avellana Art Gallery is located at A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City (fronting Gideon Academy). Call 8338357.



"BLACK Zip,"
by Tony Twigg

Twigg at Duemila

DUEMILA will present the exhibit "Perforations" by artist Tony Twigg. The exhibit will open on May 6 at 3 p.m. and will run until May 29. Galleria Duemila is at 210 Loring St., Pasay City. Call 8319990 or e-mail duemila@info.com.ph.

EUGENE Jarque

Oronos at Genesis



"BLUE Jar Series 4,"
by Ed Otis Oronos

Ed Otis Oronos presents his second solo exhibit, "A Window to Her Realm," which opens on May 5 at Genesis, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong. The exhibit presents visual contexts of the various roles of women in society. The exhibit runs until May 18. Call 6338137-38.

Pettyjohn, Ching at Mag:Net

Hanna Pettyjohn presents "The Elaborate Nest Between Child and Breast," May 4-31, at Mag:Net Gallery, ABS-CBN Center, QC. The exhibit features a composite installation of found objects and forms produced by Pettyjohn. Call 4100995. Meanwhile, Mariano Ching presents "Between the Stars and the Sea," until May 6, at Mag:Net Gallery, G/F, Paseo Center, Makati. The exhibit features installation exhibit of paintings, prints and objects. Call 8177895.

Cainglet at Art Center

Henri C. Cainglet will hold an exhibit of sculptures and paintings, "Of Butterflies and Water," on May 5 at Art Center, SM Megamall, 4/F, Bldg. A, Mandaluyong. The exhibit runs until May 21.

Artjam at LA Workshop Gallery

"Artjam for Streetkids" is ongoing until May 17 at LA Workshop Gallery, 66 G. Puyat St., BF Homes, Phase 1, featuring works by Kenneth Nieva; Christian Mirang, Jun Alfons, Dan Libor, Carlo Magno, William Yu, Arnel Borja, Teody Raciya and Rey Conmlgo. Call 8077624 or 8425200.



STUDENTS of Ayala Museum's Mentoring Program under Gig de Pio recently launched an end-of-workshop exhibit at the Glass Hall Gallery of the Museum dubbed "AM Figura." The exhibit features select artworks of the students, ranging from human figures to portraits. The exhibit runs until May 7.



"ENSLAVED," by
Ramon Rojo Realuyo

Realuyo

at Renaissance "Pulp Dreams," an exhibit of Ramon Rojo Realuyo's works, runs until May 2 at the Renaissance Gallery (4/L, Building A, SM Megamall). The exhibit showcases Realuyo's earlier works alongside his new pieces, which feature a three-dimensional combination of pulp sculpture, painting and "found" articles.

Nominations now accepted for Ateneo art awards

NOMINATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR THE 2006 Ateneo Art Awards, which are presented by the Ateneo Art Gallery together with Metro Society, Rockwell Land and Power Plant Mall.

Established in 2004 to honor the memory of the Gallery's founding benefactor, Fernando Zobel de Ayala (1924-1984), the awards are bestowed upon three Filipino visual artists, 35 years of age or under, who have made an outstanding and significant contribution to the definition and development of modern and contemporary art based upon a solo or group exhibition in any public venue held between May 2, 2005, and May 1, 2006.

Works by artists appearing in exhibitions conceptualized or curated by the Ateneo gallery and staff within their own premises will not be considered.

Nominations will be taken from the Ateneo Art Awards jury, public gallery directors (commercial and noncommercial), professional visual artists and art educators residing in the Philippines. The nominated visual artist must be a Filipino citizen, aged 35 years old or below on or before May 31.

Visual artists working or residing overseas are qualified provided that they possess Filipino citizenship. The visual artist must have had a solo or group exhibition in the 12 months preceding May 1 where the artworks submitted for consideration had appeared.

All nomination forms must be accompanied by visual documentation in either of the following formats: JPEG, AVI, WMV, MPEG, MOV, SWF and other PC-compatible formats in CD, 35-mm slide transparencies or 5R photographs.

Deadline for submission of nomination forms is on May 31.

The 2006 Ateneo Art Awards Jury is composed of Ramon E.S. Lerma, curator of the Ateneo Art Gallery; Fr. Rene Javellana, S.J., director, Ateneo Fine Arts Program; Glenna Aquino, managing editor of Metro Society and former deputy director of the Museo ng Kalinangang Pilipino, Cultural Center of the Philippines; Patrick Flores, curator, National Museum; Alice Guillermo, professor emeritus, University of the Philippines-Diliman; Eileen Legaspi-Ramirez, curatorial consultant, Lopez Memorial Museum; Patrick Reyno, trustee, Asian Cultural Council-Philippines and art collector; Jose Tence Ruiz, visual artist and curator; and Ditas Samson, curator of the Ayala Museum.

The Ateneo Art Awards will be announced at a formal ceremony at the Rockwell Tent on Aug. 8, following an exhibition of the works of the short-listed artists, Aug. 1-6, at the Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati City, titled "2006 Ateneo Art Awards: Outbound."

"Outbound" also focuses attention on the Ateneo Art Gallery Sydney Studio Residency Grant, which provides one of the three Ateneo Art Award winners with round-trip airfare, accommodation and a work studio for three weeks, an allowance, as well as an invitation to exhibit at the Cross Art Projects, a leading alternative art space in the city.

Last year, Roland Ventura received the grant.

Nomination forms may be downloaded from the Ateneo Art Gallery website, gallery.ateneo.edu. Call 4266488 or e-mail chickiamco@ateneo.edu.

US conference on arts and disability

A FIVE-MEMBER PHILIPPINE DELEGATION will attend the VSA Arts International Conference in Washington, DC, on June 9-10. The conference is a gathering of professionals in the arts, education and disability fields.

VSA Arts International was founded by Jean Kennedy Smith in 1974. It has 80 organization affiliates worldwide, including VSA Arts Philippines Inc.

The VSA Arts International is a nonprofit, nongovernment organization promoting artistic excellence and learning opportunities for adults and children with disabilities.

VSA Arts Phils. Inc. executive director Rebecca M. Santos leads the delegation with communications coordinator Ofelia Silang, community advocate Rizalinda Sanchez, craft artist Ma. Luisa Paje Luengco, and Adelaide B. Reyes from the Department of Education's Special Education Supervision.

St. Francis School-VSA Arts Phils. Inc. has been showcasing the accomplishments of students with disabilities, and also promoting access to the arts for people with disabilities. VSA Arts is an affiliate of Kennedy Center in the US capital.

Malang works . . . From page C4

Women figures remain at the core of Malang's art. Over the years, he has kept sketchbooks in which he tests different designs before committing them to canvas or paper. The sketchbooks serve as drawing boards of Malang, who is always on the lookout for fresh ideas and new materials.

He may have been more popular for his generous use of bright, happy colors, but he also never underestimates the appeal of black-and-white drawings.

Malang feels his body of work is never complete, and that is why he still keeps painting and sketching.

Finishing larger works is his biggest challenge today. "Kulang sa practice," he says, explaining he has concentrated on mostly small works in recent years.

Malang, though, is quick to rise to the challenge. To him, constant practice is the only way to go. And the energy and the enthusiasm he devotes to every piece can be seen in his vibrant colors and animated brushstrokes.

"Paintings and Drawings" formally opens at 6 p.m. tomorrow. Call 4114336 or 4119221.



"VENDORS"

Tuesday Group pays tribute to Marian month

By Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

MAY IS THE MONTH OF flowers and the Virgin Mary. It's also the month of the Santacruzan processions, in which the women brave the infernal heat in order to parade in elaborate gowns to dramatize the historic discovery of the Cross by St. Helene, the mother of the emperor Constantine, an elaborate dramatization that has captured the popular religious imagination across the centuries.

Not all Catholics, however, express their Marian devotion through the *flores de mayo* or the Santacruzan. The Tuesday Group of artists, so named because the members meet every Tuesday to sketch and to discuss art currents, honors Mary through an exhibit dubbed "Contemporary Marian Expressions."

The show, co-presented by the Manila Archdiocesan Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church (MACC), will open tomorrow at 5:30 p.m. the Manila Archdiocesan Museum on the third floor of the Arzobispado in Intramuros.

It is fitting that the group pay tribute to the woman who is hailed, just like Tuesday's child, as "full of grace." Indeed the exhibit showcases the graceful results of their labors. In a collection consisting of Mother and Child genre works and varied images

Exhibit to open at Arzobispado de Manila museum

of the Filipino woman, not only do they extol the purity and poignance of motherly love, but pay homage to womankind as well.

The montage, which may also serve as advanced Mother's Day treat, features pieces by Angel Cacnio, Jun Martinez, Elmer Gernale, Ton Raymundo, Al Perez, Menchu Arandilla, Ferdie Cacnio, Loreto

Racuya, Fernando Sena, Ernie Patrio, Nards Miranda, Bing Siochi, Mar-donio Cempron, Nick Masangcay, Rona Chua, Waldz Villanueva and many more.

The Tuesday Group of Artists used to meet for sketching sessions every Wednesday at the NCC Building under the late Dean José Joya. After Joya's death in 1995, some members organized themselves and continued meeting every Tuesday. They now hold sketching sessions every Tuesday afternoon at the CBCP Canteen in Intramuros. The weekly sessions give art enthusiasts the chance to sit with 30 or more artists and take home 15



"MOTHER and Child," by Angel Cacnio



"MOTHER and Child," by Nards Miranda



TUESDAY group sketching session

artworks at very friendly prices.

In connection with the exhibit, the commission is also sponsoring a series of lectures on the visual representations of Mary.

Rev. Fr. Isidro C. Abaño, O.P., director of the the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Museum of Arts and Sciences, will speak on "Philippine Iconography of Mary"; and Professor, Regalado Trota José, renowned author, historian and lecturer in the Cultural Heritage Studies program of UST, will lecture on "The Virgin in Philippine Ivory Art."

The lectures will be held May 3, 4:30 p.m. at the Conference Room of the Arzobispado de Manila, Intramuros, Manila. Attendance is limited. Call 5245062 for reservations.

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When you store and handle fish safely, you guarantee your family a healthy meal. Always wash your hands thoroughly before and after handling fish. Raw fish, when handled improperly, may contain certain bacteria. To prevent bacterial cross-contamination, avoid letting raw meat juices touch ready-to-eat food by keeping raw and cooked fish in separate containers. Use hot, soapy water to thoroughly wash any knives, cutting surfaces, and sponges used when preparing fresh fish.

When you purchase fresh or frozen fish, always keep it cold. Store fish in a well-chilled refrigerator, preferably with a temperature between 0 °C and 3 °C, until fish is ready to use.

Even thawing frozen fish can greatly affect how safe it is for consumption. The best way to thaw is overnight in the refrigerator. When you defrost fish gradually, fewer juices leak out, keeping your fish fresh and flavorful. But if you need to thaw fish quickly, seal fish in a plastic bag and immerse in cold water for about an hour.

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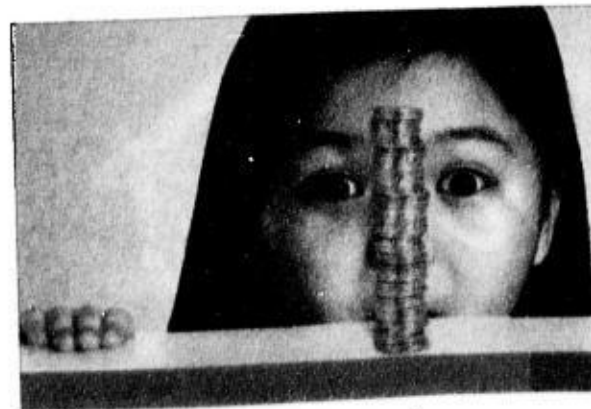
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Women figures remain at the core of his art. And despite his generous use of bright, happy colors, he never underestimates the appeal of black-and-white drawings



"WOMEN"

Malang works fill four showrooms

MALANG, SHOWING NO SIGNS OF slowing down, fills all the four exhibition showrooms at the Mary Santos Artcade on West Ave., Quezon City, with his exhibit, "Paintings and Drawings," which opens May 2. On view until May 20 are about 90 works, showcasing Malang's diverse interests and skill in using different media.

It is no surprise that Malang can come up with such a large number of works, enough to fill up all the gallery space in the New Mary Santos Arcade, named after his late wife and launched last year as a multipurpose venue for different art forms, such as paintings, sculptures, prints and drawings.

The show also marks the first time a solo artist is holding an exhibit in all the four exhibition showrooms.

"Paintings and Drawings" features old and new works, some dating as far back as the 1990s. At the main gallery (West Gallery) are Malang's larger pieces in oil, acrylic, gouche and charcoal.

The three smaller exhibition showrooms will feature Malang's creative versatility and openness to different materials, such as gouche, the medium which he is most at ease; charcoal, ink and acrylic; and oil pastels and soft pastels.



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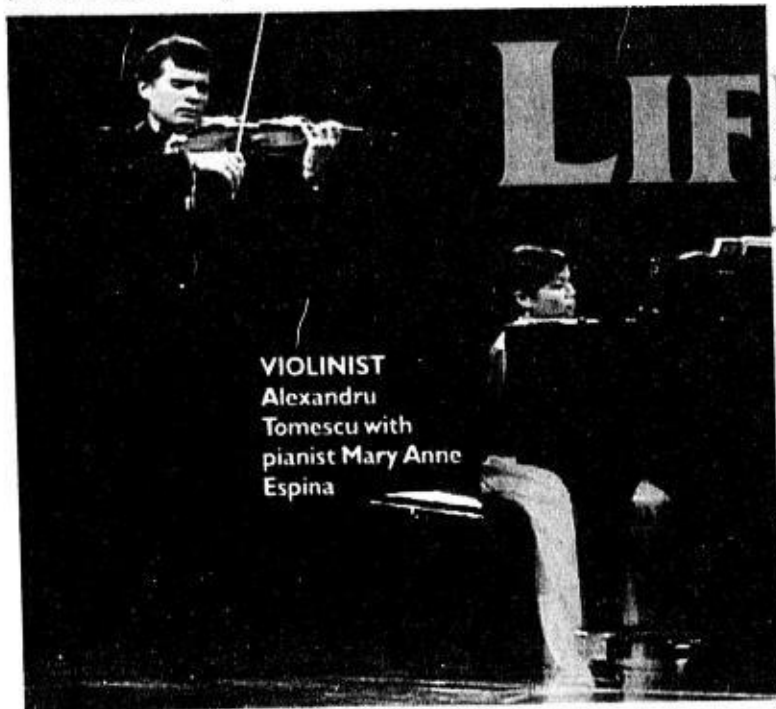
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Tomescu, great artist, great person

STORY ON PAGE D3

Pinay pianist wins top US prize

HIYAS ALEJO HILA, A FIRST-year student in the Doctor of Musical Arts degree program in Piano Performance at University of Minnesota's School of Music, bagged top prizes in several piano competitions in Minnesota, US.

On April 23, Hila won the first prize in piano, graduate division, at the 83rd Annual Scholarship Competition of the Schubert Club of Minnesota.

In February, she took the second prize in the Elinor Bell Piano Competition. In December, she was one of three winners in the University Concerto Competitions participated in by over 30 students majoring in different instruments.

She was also the first recipient of the University's Centennial Piano Fellowship given to an incoming student who gives an outstanding performance in live audition.

She will perform her winning piece, Mozart's Piano Concerto in A Major, K 488, with the University of Minnesota Symphony Orchestra on May 5, at the Ted Mann



HIYAS Alejo Hila

Concert Hall.

Immediately after her performance, she will proceed to the Olson Campus Center of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, to perform in a winners' concert.

A Quimson Fellow of the Asian Cultural Council, Hila studies with Leventritt and Leeds Competition winner, professor Lydia Artymiw.

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS



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New readings

"Sellamillion" by Adam Roberts is a parody of JRR Tolkien's famous trilogy. With an experimental version of the "Lord of the Rings" in the style of "Dr. Seuss," this book will surely have you laughing nonstop.



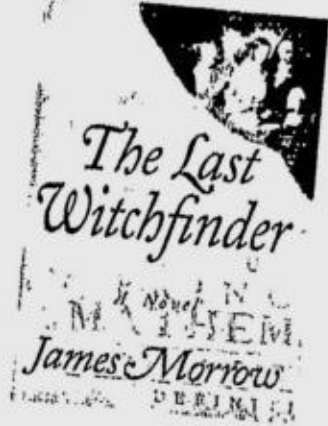
David Kindred's "Sound of Fury: The Parallel Lives and Fateful Friendship of Muhammad Ali and Howard Cosell" recounts the unlikely alliance between the ultimate odd couple, sportscaster Howard Cosell and heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali.

"Prisoner in the Garden: Opening Nelson Mandela's Prison Archive" provides a compelling insight into the elder statesman's 27 years in the Robben Island prison.



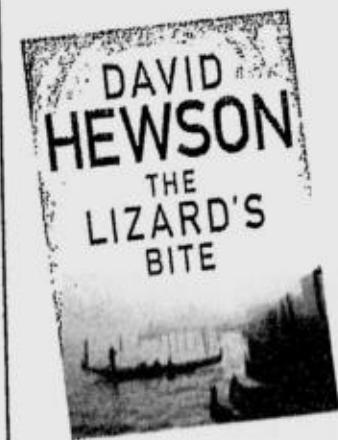
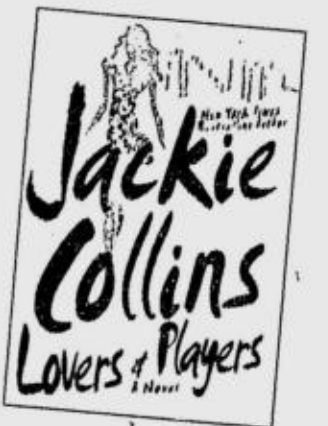
Danielle Steele's new novel, "The House," brilliantly captures one woman's courageous choice to pour herself into a dream—and receive the gifts in return.

Rich in detail, rollicking in style and endlessly engaging, James Morrow's "The Last Witchfinder," is a tour de force of historical fiction as it goes back to Restoration England and tells the story of a woman who will not rest until she puts the last witchfinder out of business.



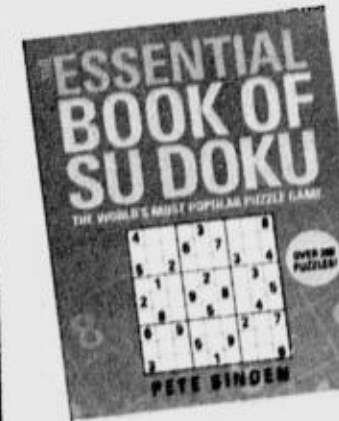
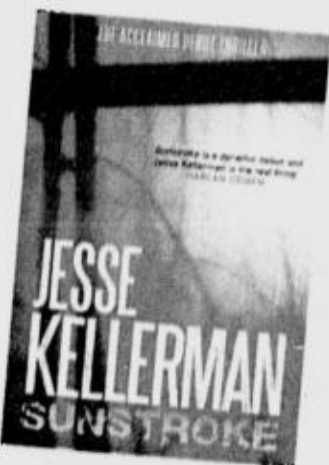
Celia Dart-Thornton brings us the second book of The Crowthistle Chronicles. "The Well of Tears" introduces us to Jewel, a beautiful maiden who is left with the promise of true love and a powerful secret.

Jackie Collins' "Lovers and Players" is a highly charged love story about family relationships, deadly choices and dangerous sex.



"The Lizard's Bite" by David Hewson delves into the shadowy world that lies beneath Venice's sparkling façade—a world where the usual rules do not apply.

A page-turning, highly accomplished thriller about a secretary in search for the truth after the death of her boss whom she is madly in love with, "Sunstroke" by Jesse Kellerman, marks the emergence of one of the most distinctive new voices in the genre.



With more than 200 puzzles created especially for this book, "The Essential Book of Su Doku" is a deceptively simple and completely addictive number-placement game. It will surely bring hours of fun to first-time players as well as to those who have already fallen under its spell.

The books are available at PowerBooks Specialty Store, which has branches at Greenbelt 4 (7576428 to 29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang Town Center (8505662 to 63), Glorietta (7527075), Shangri-La (6380023/25) and Robinsons Place Ermita (5233334/5243448).

National Artist Tiempo names fellows to Dumaguete workshop

NATIONAL ARTIST FOR Literature Edith L. Tiempo, co-founder and director of the National Writers Workshop in Dumaguete City, has announced the list of Writing Fellows for the 45th edition of the longest-running writing workshop in the country.

For poetry, the fellows are Darwin Chiong and Michellian Kristine Sarile of De La Salle University, Andrea Teran of Ateneo de Manila University, and Ana Escalante Neri of UP

Manila.

For creative nonfiction, they are Patricia Evangelista of UP Diliman and Noel Pingoy of Davao Medical Center.

For short fiction, the fellows are Douglas James Candano and Antonio Adrian Habana of Ateneo de Manila, Erika Jean Cabanawan of UP Los Baños, Larissa Mae Suarez of Philippine High School for the Arts, and Dominique Cimafranca of University of San Carlos.

Sponsored by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and coordinated

by the Dumaguete Literary Arts Service Group (or Dula, Inc. headed by Ernesto Superal Yee), the workshop will be held at the CAP Building in Dumaguete City May 8-26.

Among the panelists expected to assist Tiempo are Dumaguete-based writers Yee, Bobby Villasis and Cesar Ruiz Aquino, as well as guest panelists Rowena Torrevillas from the University of Iowa, R. Zamora Linmark from Honolulu and San Francisco, NCCA Literature Committee chair Lito Zulueta, Gémino H. Abad, Marjorie Evasco, Susan Lara, DM Reyes, Anthony Tan and Krip Yuson.

15 fellows to 13th Iligan National Writers Workshop

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CULTURE AND ARTS (NCCA), Mindanao Creative Writers Group, Inc., and MSU-IIT Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Extension (OVCRE) announce the 15 writing fellows to the 13th Iligan National Writers Workshop on May 22-25 in Iligan City.

Fiction in English: Anna Felicia C. Sanchez, Marikina City; Catherine C. Bucu, Caloocan City; Monica S. Macansantos, Baguio City; Erwin A. Martinez, Caloocan City; and Romel Tomaring Villaflo, Cotabato City. All the fellows for fiction in English are from the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

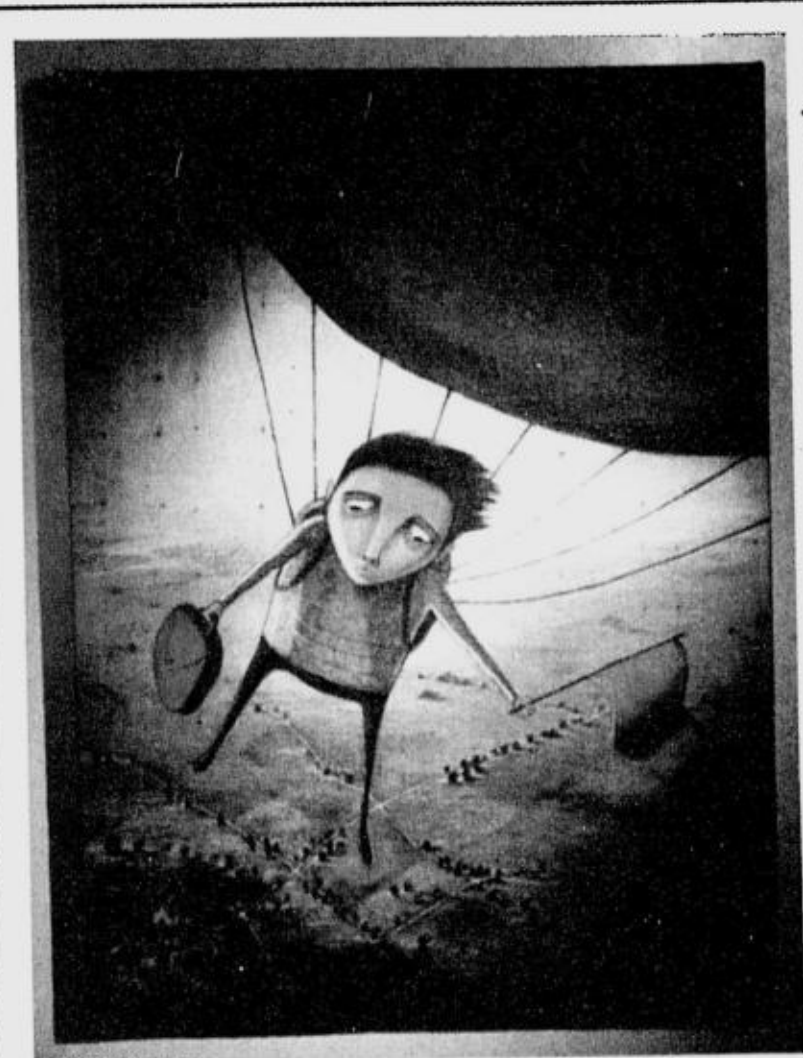
Other fellows in fiction: Piya Cruz Constantino (UP Diliman), fiction in Filipino; Josua S. Cabrera (University of Cebu), fiction in Cebuano; Hermenigildo A. Sanchez (Cabalogan, Samar) fiction in Waray; and Linda Cababa Espinosa (Western Mindanao State University), fiction in Chabacano.

Poetry in Filipino: Mark Anthony Angeles, Manila (PUP); Carlos M. Picos III, Quezon City (UP Diliman); Reggy C. Figer, Tacloban City (UP Diliman); and Hilda Rosca Nartea, Quezon City (UP Diliman).

Other fellows in poetry: Greg Fernandez (University of Cebu), poetry in Cebuano; and Lester Mark P. Carnaje, Iloilo City (West Visayas State University), poetry in Hiligaynon.

Panelists this year are Rosario Cruz Lucero, Erlinda Kintanar Alburo, Merlie M. Alunan, Jaime An Lim, Steven Patrick C. Fernandez, Leoncio P. Deriada, and Michael U. Obenieta, 1996 writing fellow of the 3rd INWW and keynote speaker this year. Workshop director is Christine Godinez Ortega.

The 12th INWW proceedings, "The State of Constant Beginnings," edited by Godinez-Ortega and published by the MSU-IIT OVCRE, will be launched during the last day of the workshop.



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Book tackles Filipino family's 15-year stay in China

ANVIL PUBLISHING, INC., AND THE Maningning Miclat Art Foundation announce the launching of the book, "Beyond the Great Wall," at National Bookstore, Shangri-La Plaza, Edsa, Mandaluyong at 6 p.m., May 5.

The book is a selection of personal essays on China, the Chinese and being Filipino. It is written by UP professor, writer and poet, Mario Ignacio Miclat, his wife Alma, and daughters Maningning and Banaue. The essays tackle their 15-year sojourn in China from 1971 to 1986, covering the periods of Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution, the death of Premier Zhou Enlai, the downfall of the Gang of Four, and the reforms initiated by "paramount leader," Deng Xiaoping.

Miclat, in his preface, says: "For 15 years, my family of native Filipinos lived in the shadows of the Great Wall. All through 1971 to 1986, we experienced the Middle Kingdom in

depth and breadth. We made regular sojourns to different places, many of which were restricted not only to foreigners but also to the ordinary Chinese. We were privileged to see a world beyond the Great Wall."

The book contains the authors' personal essays on the arts, culture, the economy, politics and society arranged under four headings: situating the family, searching for self, reversing the diaspora, and finding the nation.

Alma Miclat is SVP of Data Center Design Corporation in Makati. Meanwhile, Banaue is a film and theater actress who is graduating in June with a Master of Fine Arts in Acting at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. Maningning was a multi-awarded artist, poet and writer in Filipino, English and Chinese.

The book will also be launched at the Cranwell International Center of Virginia Poly-

technic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, USA, on May 25. Signing tours are also scheduled for New York and San Diego in spring.

Published by Anvil Publishing, Inc., royalties and proceeds from the sale of the book will benefit the Maningning Miclat Art Foundation, Inc. (MMAFI), a non-stock, nonprofit organization. The MMAFI has been holding the Maningning Miclat Trilingual Poetry Competition during odd-numbered years and the Maningning Miclat Art Competition during even-numbered years.

This year, MMAFI will hold the art competition for visual artists 28 years old and below with the grand prize winning P28,000 and a glass sculpture trophy by Ramon Orlina. E-mail maningningmiclatfoundation@gmail.com, acmiclat2004@yahoo.com and visit www.maningning.com for details.

Tonight, these love verses will live in your skin

By Ralph Semino Galán
Contributor

IN HIS THIRD BOOK OF POETRY, "Pulotgata: The Love Poems" (Anvil Publishing, 88 pages), Danton Remoto delves the depths of the human heart through lyrics in English and Filipino that sing of the anxiety and the excitement, the agony and the ecstasy which accompany the act of love.

The joy of loving and the consummation of desire are celebrated in "Tonight I Will Live in Your Skin," (inspired by Pablo Neruda's penultimate love poem in "Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada"), "Water," "Fire and Ice," "Autumn," "Room," "Black Silk Pajamas," "Song of the Flute," "Destination," "Dawn," "The Seat of Love," "The Ring" and "Sky."

Meanwhile, the pain of parting and the power of memory to redeem those special moments, which otherwise would be lost to oblivion, are articulated in the following pieces: "Childhood," "Burning Season," "Chairs," "Snowstorm," "Departure," "Rain," "Stairway," "In Tagaytay," "Winter," "All the Clichés," "At Bellarmine" and "Song of Rumi."

The poems in Filipino, whether of the first or second persuasion, are more precise and direct, penetrating the heart of the matter with the sharpest of inquiries and insights:

"ano kayang bitag! Ang itinatago ng buhay! para sa akin?/" ["Pagdidilim 1"]; "ibig mag-ing buhangin/upang masarayan/kahit min-

san man lamang/ng kanyang talampakan// ["Baler, na Bayan Niya"]; "Pag-ibig ay tinig na tila sagwan/humahati sa dagat ng kawalan/" ["Hindi Kinang ng Buwan"]; "tinipong hininga ng mga mangingibig!—/at sandaling inisip/ang karahasan ng pag-asa" ["Kabalayero"]; "Ikaw,/na iniwan akong nag-lisa,/walang kaibigan/o kasama,/kundi mga wikang dayuhan/at paibaiba/" ["Wika"].

There is a seeming simplicity in Remoto's poetry in his choice of words and images. He does not employ verbal fireworks. Nor does he rely on arcane and orphic tropes that confuse the reader into believing that something profound is being revealed. Instead, he uses carefully selected metaphors and similes to convey his thoughts and feelings.

Image-based

Imagism has had a very strong influence on Remoto's versifying, via Amygism (after Amy Lowell, who published the three-volume anthology "Some Imagist Poets") and the Bagay poetry espoused by Rolando Tinio and company.

A close reading of the poems will reveal that they conform to most of the guiding principles of Imagism/Amygism, "that poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous," and that "concentration is of the very essence of poetry."

The image-making of Remoto is best described as elemental, evoking connections between the male body and the natural world, between powerful emotions and stark details of flora and fauna.

Here are some examples: "My breath will begin by flowering! in the caves of your

ears]" ["Tonight I Will Live in Your Skin"]; "I will be the Falls of Dochart hurtling itself/down the hills of Breadalbane,/the rocks rumbling with my cascading force/" ["Water"]; "Water slides down/the leaves/like tongue on skin" ["Rain"]; "Swans skimmed the skin/of your surface/" ["Winter"]; "summer's thunder/lighting up the sky/oh heat thick/as desire/" ["The Way We Live"]; "My fingers brushing against/the ferns in the mountain! of your hair/" ["Destination"]; "your lips brushing/like a butterfly's wing/against my lips/" ["Dawn"].

Among the poems in Filipino with strong imagery are: "Duhat na hinog ang mga mata ng gabi" ["Gabi"]; "tila mga ibong hapo/na humahapon sa pugad/ng iyong puso/" ["Kaarawan"]; "Sa aming likuran,/ang mga sanga/ay nagiging kandila./May talab/ang kanilang lagablab/" ["Ang Tawag"]; "Matang may kubling/lungkot,/mga salitang maigsi,/manipis pa/sa hugis-suklay na buwan/" ["Simula"]; At ang iyong mga daliri'y/naglalakbay, pumapasok,/nawawala/sa mga ulan ng aking buhok/" ["Pulotgata"].

There is also a sense of immediacy to Remoto's love lyrics, for almost all of the poems are written in the present or present perfect tense. Hence, the presence of the persona, the controlling consciousness, permeates the scene of each poem, the objective situation, even the spaces in between.

Another interesting feature of Remoto's poetry is its capacity to transcend traditional gender barriers, despite its homosexual underpinnings. Except for a few homoerotic pieces, which some conservative readers might find rather offensive, most of the other poems are written in good taste, with the right amount of tenderness and tenacity of spirit.



Tomescu, great artist, great person

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

THE TALK OF THE TOWN IS the seamless performances of Romanian violinist Alexandru Tomescu at Philamlife Theater, Pasig Museum and St. James the Great Parish Church in Ayala-Alabang.

The violinist dazzled critics and lay music lovers alike and left the crowd teary-eyed over his rendition of Massenet's "Meditation" (from the opera "Thais"), which he had dedicated to the late Maestra Dalisay Aldaba.

To his audience, Tomescu was a prince of music.

What moved me was the report that Tomescu did not just visit Maestro Redentor Romero's grave for the ninth time at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina; he also brought along his expensive violin and played De Guzman's "Bayan Ko" and Massenet's "Meditation." When I told this to columnist Jullie Yap Daza, she felt her hair stand up.

Yes, Tomescu played those pieces a cappella in memory of



ALEXANDRU
Tomescu, violinist

the Filipino musician who first introduced him to Filipino audiences.

When he learned that his new Filipino fan, filmmaker Marilou Diaz Abaya, was observing her birthday recently, he disrupted his day-out to play the De Guzman and Massenet pieces for the celebrator. The director herself

was in tears during his performance at Philamlife Theater.

What Tomescu did to Romero and Abaya showed that the musician is not just a great artist; he is also a great and generous person.

In Cagayan de Oro

How do you cope with a con-

cert held in a mall's cinema-house and with only an upright piano tasked to deliver a G Minor Mendelssohn concerto with a chamber orchestra?

Well, SM Cagayan de Oro City was the setting of the latest outreach concert of pianist Ingrid Sala Santamaria and the Peace Philharmonic Philp-

pines Chamber Players led by conductor Ariel Perez.

When audiences started coming in, some of them with popcorn, I told myself this concert should be called "Mozart and Mendelssohn In-Between Mouthful of Popcorn."

But my pessimism soon faded when I witnessed a very attentive audience listening to the three movements of the Mendelssohn concerto, which capped an afternoon of Mozart, Elgar and our very own Angel Pena (Prelude and Fugue on "Bahay Kubo") and Manuel Velez ("Sa Kabukiran").

To be sure, the Mercedes upright piano had seen better days and even if the comparison was out of the question, an electronic piano would have fared better.

But Santamaria refused to be fazed by a bad upright. She actually played on it as though it were a Steinway grand. The molto allegro con fuoco and andante movements materialized without major mishap, and the end of the presto movement was greeted with a

standing ovation and a clamor for an encore.

The PPP Chamber Players was at its best. This was one concert recommended by Marissa Fernan of SM Cebu to SM Cagayan de Oro mall manager Paul Ferrer, and the result was sheer magic.

In the post-concert reception, this non-shopper admitted to Ferrer that art and commerce could actually blend beautifully. I witnessed this happen in SM Cagayan de Oro City.

In this SM setting, shoppers can actually watch the concert for free, if they can show purchase receipts worth P1,000.

That music lovers in Cagayan de Oro came en masse after shopping to watch a Mendelssohn concerto is my latest encounter with classical music in an unlikely setting.

"If you open the eyes of young audiences to classical music by shopping, then these concerts are all worth our time," said pianist Santamaria, who seems to have introduced a new era of live orchestral music in the Visayas.



ADVENTIST Chamber Orchestra with Jonathan Arevalo Co, Ingrid Santamaria, Evelyn Ronquillo (College of Music) and Olive Tolentino (University Publications)

Adventist summer music festival

THE ADVENTIST PHILHARMONIC Orchestra Development Program (Apo-DP) Summer Festival will feature the Adventist Chamber Orchestra with Ingrid Santamaria as piano soloist on May 21, 4 p.m., at the Equitable-PCI Bank's Francisco Santiago Hall, Makati Avenue.

The event is free to the public. Donations to the Apo-DP and Adventist University of the Philippines College of Music building will be

appreciated.

The program pays tribute to Maestra Rizalina Buenaventura, "our national treasure," according to Rosalinda Orosa. It will feature Mozart's "Il Re Pastore Overture" (celebrating Mozart's 250th Birth Year), National Artist Antonino Buenaventura's "Pandango sa Ilaw," "Awit ng Kabataan," "Philippines Triumphant," and "Ode to the Republic," and Chopin's Piano Concerto No.1 in E Minor.

Conductor is Jonathan Arevalo Co.

Through a venue grant from the Manila Chamber Orchestra (MCO) Foundation and Equitable PCI Bank, the Adventist University of the Philippines is gathering musicians around Luzon toward realizing its mission to form the Adventist Philharmonic Orchestra.

For ticket reservations, call 0921-2172617.



PARTICIPANTS
in the summer
music camp

Gantimpala holds auditions

THE GANTIMPALA THEATER FOUNDATION (GTF) will hold auditions on May 18 (Actors Company) and May 19 (general), 2-7 p.m., at the Rehearsal Hall of Concert at the Park Auditorium, Luneta, Manila.

The auditions signify the start of GTF's 29th season, said Tony S. Espejo, founding president and artistic director.

The newly elected GTF board of trustees are Ed Murillo, Roobak Valle, Perry Dizon, Billy Parjan and Len-Ag Santos-Siasoco.

Auditioners could either be male or female, ages 18-50 years old, with pleasing personality, with stage experience preferred but not required, and fluent in Filipino and English.

They must bring a resumé, a 2" x 2" color

photograph, and must be ready to perform excerpts from GTF plays.

The 29th season plays include the four classics—"Florante at Laura," "Kanser (Noli Me Tangere)," "El Filibusterismo," "Ibong Adarna"—and the fourth season of the GTF National Artist Production series featuring "Forever/Call Me Flory," stage plays written by Wilfrido Maria Guerrero, National Artist for Theater.

GTF's TheatreNow will also be producing "Ang Tahanan ni Bernarda Alba," "Sub-text," and "Si Tunyong at ang Mahiwagang Libro ng Kasaysayan," a children's musical by José Victor Torres about time traveling.

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TOGETHER



SMI
SUPERMALLS

May 2	- SM Megamall: Pictorial of Finalists
May 5	- SM City San Lazaro: Rehearsal Briefing MOMMY Make-over Fair
May 6	- SM City Manila and SM Supercenter Valenzuela: Mini Show
May 7	- SM City Sta.Mesa and SM City San Lazaro: Mini Show
May 13	- SM City Sucat: Talent Presentation
May 14	- SM City Fairview: Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals

May 11	- Photo session of Mother and Daughter Finalists
May 12-14	- Display of Mother and Daughter Finalists' photos
May 14	- Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals and Fashion Show
	- Mother and Daughter Finalist Make-over sessions
May 15-21	- Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

May 10	- Photo session of Mother and Daughter Finalists
May 11-14	- "Just Like Mom!" Display of Mother & Daughter Finalists' photos
May 14	- "Looks Like Mom, Looks Like Me!" Mother and Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals and Fashion Show
	- Mother & Daughter Finalist Make-over sessions
May 15-21	- Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

May 7 - Presentation of candidates for Mother and Daughter Look-Alike Contest
May 12 - Photo session with photo shop tenants
May 13 - Make-over c/o Salon Tenants
May 14 - Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals with Jolina Magdangal
May 15-21 - Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

May 12	- Unveiling of the Photo Booth (Mother and Daughter Look-Alike Entries) - Super Moms... Gorgeous Moms: A Fashion Show - Mother and Daughter's Vanity Day
May 12-14	- Mother and Daughter Look-Alike Photo Booth
May 13	- Sing-A-Mega Grand Finals (w/ Mother and Daughter Look-Alike: presentation of contestants)
May 14	- Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals
May 15-21	- Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

- May 11 - Photo sessions of Mother & Daughter Finalists
- May 12-14 - Display of Mother & Daughter Finalists' photos
- May 14 - Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest Grand Finals and Fashion Show
- May 15-21 - Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

May 12-14 - Display of Mother & Daughter Finalists' photos
May 14 - Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals
May 13-14 - Spongebob and Patrick Fish
May 15-21 - Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

May 1-14	- Display of photos for Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest. (tie-up with Globe, Smart, Talk N' Text and Touch Mobile for the Texter's Choice Award)
May 12	- Finalists mall tour with photo session & make-over
May 13	- Tribute to Moms with Tang Juice Drinks featuring Sis of GMA7
May 14	- Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals
May 15-21	- Mother and Daughter Fashion Show
May 15-21	- Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

May 12-14 - Photo gallery of Mother and Daughter Look-Alike Contest Finalists
May 12 - Mother's Day Fair
May 13 - Rocksteady mall tour
May 14 - Toltis mall tour
- Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals
- Announcement of winners
May 15-21 - Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

SIM CITY CELEBS

- May 13 - Mother's Day Fair
- May 14 - Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals
- May 15-21 - Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

SM CITY ILOILO

May 9-14 - Photo display of Mother and Daughter Look-Alike Contest Finalists
- "Guess How Much I Love You", Wall of Greetings

May 12-14 - Moms Make-over Fair

May 14 - Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals

May 15-21 - Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

May 9-10 - Pamper your Mom
May 14 - Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals
May 15-21 - Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest

SM CITY DAVAO

May 14	- Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Grand Finals - Miss Philippines Search - Moms and Kids Fun Fair c/o Mom's Radio (A fun set of educational activities for mothers and their kids)
May 15-21	- Photo gallery of 3 winning pairs of Mother & Daughter Look-Alike Contest
May 30	- Beautiful Mom 2006 - Beauty Pageant for mothers.

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